This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

UCSF LIBRARY / UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

VHF

Marshall

Battling for Gold.

Stirring Incidents of Goldfields Life in West Australia. * * *

BY

JOHN HANSHALL.

MELBOURNE:

[illegible]

Battling for Gold.

Stirring Incidents of Goldfields Life in West Australia. • • •

BY

JOHN MARSHALL.

1. Creed — Prayer and
Constitution

BATTLING FOR GOLD,

OR

STIRRING INCIDENTS OF GOLDFIELDS LIFE

IN

WEST AUSTRALIA.

To dear Grandma
from Frank.

John Marshall, the Author.

BATTLING FOR GOLD,

OR

STIRRING INCIDENTS OF GOLDFIELDS LIFE

IN

WEST AUSTRALIA.

BY

JOHN MARSHALL.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

MELBOURNE:
E. W. COLE,
PRINCIPAL BIBLIOPOLE TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.
BOOK ARCADE.
AND AT SYDNEY AND ADELAIDE.

PREFACE.

I OFFER no apology for this little book—and none I hope will be needed.—No effort has been made, so far, to write the early history of the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia, or even to tell the more stirring incidents which have taken place—records of which shall, I believe, be read with interest by future generations.

I have made no attempt to overdraw these lights and shadows of goldfields life, and only facts have, so far as my knowledge goes, been given.

I am indebted to the Editor of "The Wide World Magazine" for permission to republish some of the more stirring and personal of these sketches as they first appeared in the columns of that popular and widely read Journal.

With all their faults and imperfections I send them into the world, and consign them to the tender mercies of their friends and the serrated teeth of their critics.

JOHN MARSHALL.

Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie,
February, 1903.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Discovery of Gold in Westralia	9
Finding of Coolgardie	13
Off to the Goldfields	17
The Expected Storm	27
The Bogus Gold "Rush" at Coolgardie	29
The Lucky Prospector	42
Fire! Fire! Fire!	46
The First Great Fire	48
Battling for a Home	54
Goldfields Experience	58
The Great Londonderry Golden Hole	62
The Mount Black Rush	71
Premier's First Visit to Coolgardie...	77
Sir John Forrest's Triumph	80
Danger, Disease and Death	83
The First Goldfields Wedding	89
Amenities of Goldfields Political Life	93
A Special Cyclist Chased by Dingoes	101
"Bail Up!" or Robbery under Arms...	103
Fortune, But, Alas! Too Late	109
The Open Call Exchange	115
The Great Golden Mountain	122
The First Murder on the Goldfields	130
Robbery Under Arms	135
The Diggers Roll Up	140
A Dear Drink..	148
Father Long and His "Sacred Nugget"	152
Horrors of Thirst	163
The "Graveyard Rush" at Kanowna	171
Shoot at Him or I'll Kill You	177
A Goldfields Riot	182
Queen of the Earth	190
The Power of Gold	195
The Price of the Goldfields	201

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN WESTRALIA.

There is no pursuit in the world more absorbing, more fascinating and oftentimes more dangerous, than that of prospecting and mining for gold. No dangers are too great, no hardships too severe for the daring prospector if he thinks that by enduring them he will reap his reward. There is a sort of glamour, a peculiar fascination, about a gold-bearing country which is not about any other. It strikes the popular imagination and impresses all with its vast potentialities, and the earth is in a real and literal sense to the digger the storehouse of all wealth. The history of those countries in which gold has been found in payable quantities has usually been a stirring one. Men of the most marvellous energy and daring find a fitting arena for their peculiar gifts. The strongest passions have full play. Men have dared and done and suffered much in the quest for gold. In no country in the world has this daring borne such grand results as in the State of Western Australia. From being a poor, despised and forsaken State, it has been lifted by the energy and enterprise of its mining men to a proud pre-eminence amongst its sister States.

Gold was first discovered in the eastern portion of the State in the latter part of the eighties by a man named Glass, who was digging a post hole at a station

between Northam and Southern Cross. The news of the finding of gold soon spread, and a number of parties went out in search of the precious metal, but without obtaining any success. The Government of the colony, which was then under the Crown, sent out a party under the leadership of Bernard Norbert Colreavy. This party was away for eight months, and on their return to Perth reported that they had discovered nothing of a payable character. The Government then refused to send any other party out and Mr. Colreavy went away on his own account to where he had previously passed through and was fortunate enough to be able to return a few months later with the news that he had discovered two reefs at a place called the Golden Valley, which, he considered, were payable. Companies were floated to work these reefs and mining operations carried on for several years.

Some months after this Southern Cross was found by Fraser, Twomey, Riseley and Anstey, and some fairly good, but rather low grade mines, were opened up. In 1891 the mines in Southern Cross were in full swing, and they kept working till the middle of August, 1892, when, owing to the poorness of the ore and the high cost of working the mines the companies decided to reduce the wages of the miners, which reduction they refused to accept and went on strike. The upshot was that the mines were shut down and the bulk of the miners, seeing little or no chance of doing any good, left the field and went back to the Eastern States, leaving only 200 men, most of whom were unable to get away. The strike dragged on for some time and the men were beginning to lose all heart. They were in an arid country, far away from a centre of population, the prices of food and water were excessively high with little chance of profitable employment. Need it be wondered at that the men become sullen and dejected.

Diggers' Meeting at a Bogus Gold "Rush."

FINDING OF COOLGARDIE.

On Saturday morning, 17th September, 1892, a solitary horseman named Arthur Bailey rode into Southern Cross. He had previously been seen taking out "tucker" to the back country, and it was understood that he and his mate were out prospecting for gold. He looked rough and rugged, and there was nothing about him that morning to indicate that he was the man destined to exercise a more potent influence on the destinies of the State than, probably, any other man who will follow him. He made his way to the Warden's office and reported having discovered a new goldfield "128 miles from Southern Cross in an easterly direction," and applied for a "Reward Claim" on account of his discovery. As a proof of the veracity of his statements and the richness of the new find he exhibited 540 ozs. of gold, worth over £2000, which he alleged had been obtained from the ground he had pegged out. The Warden, after hearing his statements, granted him a Reward Claim in compliance with the Mining Laws.

When the news of the discovery of a new and extraordinarily rich goldfield was made public the miners in Southern Cross, who had been wretched, dispirited, and at their wits end to know what to do, became jubilant. Care was thrown to the winds and the diggers laid themselves out for a big "jamboree" dur-

ing which the process known as "painting the town red" was carried out to perfection. The following day, (Sunday), after dinner, the whole population of Southern Cross, with the exception of a few Government officials and two or three publicans, left for what is now known as Coolgardie. Horses, which, the previous day, could have been purchased for £5, were readily saleable at from £40 to £50 each. The prices of provisions rose 50 per cent. Those who had the money to pay for the carriage of their swags by team to the new goldfield did so, the price being 1s. per. lb. weight for goods of all descriptions, but the larger number of men had not the money to pay such high prices for cartage, so they decided to walk the 128 miles and carry their beds, food and water on their backs—a truly courageous undertaking. It was a good season, however, the gnamma holes were full of water, there was a fair amount of grass for the horses, and on the whole even those who had to carry their belongings had not to endure the hardships they had anticipated at the beginning of their long and weary tramp.

Arrival of Mail Coach in the Early Days, 1894.

OFF TO THE GOLDFIELDS.

It is rather difficult for the stranger who arrives in Kalgoorlie or any of the other goldfields centres and sees the high standard of comfort prevailing—the electric light, which is used at nearly all the mining centres; the evidences on every hand of wealth and luxury; the well-dressed crowds of men and women; the cleanliness of the streets; the width of the footpaths and the general air of prosperity—to understand and appreciate the fact that all this marvellous progress has been achieved within the space of little more than ten years.

It is truly wonderful that such a short period should convert a barren desert, the abode of a small tribe of the lowest type of aboriginals, into a province where the highest achievements have found a fitting arena, and where the pluck, the energy, and determination of the Anglo-Saxon race have performed marvels.

It is even harder to form a just conception of the disadvantages the early pioneers had to contend with; the hardships and dangers they had to endure. It was no light task to attempt to reach Coolgardie after it was first discovered, as the distance had to be done on foot, first from York or Northam on through all the various stages till Southern Cross was reached, and then to the goal. The man who attempted the task had to have a stout heart, good health, be capable of standing fatigue, and have some pounds in his pocket, and only the most adventurous would attempt the journey.

But the stories of rich finds of alluvial gold at Coolgardie were filling men's minds with the lust therefor, and, in the older settled districts, "there was little a-making, and many to keep!" Men, it was rumoured, had made fortunes quickly, easily, when they got to the golden land, and what men had done other men might do. Despite the entreaties of those near and dear to us we resolved to "chance it." If we perished on the road then we would at least die fighting for wealth, trying to better our position and that of those we loved; and, if not, our chances were as good as ninety-nine out of every hundred.

At the present stage of the field's progress such reflections may appear to some ridiculous in the extreme. But we can assure such that it was considered no light task, taken up with a heavy heart, and made no lighter by the wild stories told by those who had returned from the new discovery, and which we then believed.

When we reached Northam, then the terminus of the Government railway, we found about 2000 people camped at and around the station, waiting till the drought would break up and the road be opened to Coolgardie. Some of these had been waiting for months, unwilling to venture up after listening to the tales of privations and disease told by those who had been unsuccessful and had left the field disgusted.

On every hand we heard the cry, "It is folly to go any further till the rain falls; the road is blocked for traffic, and no one is allowed to leave without a pass!" Coolgardie, however, was our goal, and we were determined, at all hazards, to push on to it, the dangers to be encountered only acting as a stimulus to press forward.

Past experience on American goldfields had taught us that there are always plenty of people to decry a

"Dry Blowing" for Alluvial Gold.

diggings where such have not succeeded themselves. When we reached Southern Cross, after a by no means uneventful journey, we found that there was a certain amount of truth in the stories we had heard. It was stated that we would have to obtain a passport from the Warden to get water on the road between the Cross and Coolgardie. A certain number of teams were permitted to go out from Southern Cross each day, loaded only with provisions. No grog, building material, or unnecessary provisions were permitted to be carried.

The town of Southern Cross was then one of the busiest in the colony. The public places were crowded, the hotels doing a roaring business with all drinks 1s. each. One poor mortal, sick at heart through a continued run of bad luck and drugged with bad whisky, shuffled off his mortal coil by shooting himself with a revolver as we were passing through the street on our way to the camp.

We met men who had just returned from Coolgardie, living epistles of the hardships and troubles they had endured, many of them pinched and wan, with hair prematurely grey. The tales they told were enough to turn a man's resolution sour, and we pitied a few men, old and young, who, listening to their pitiful tales of woe, determined to turn back, some of whom had travelled from the north of Queensland to go to Coolgardie.

We were fortunate enough to fall in with a young West Australian who had just arrived from Coolgardie with his team and waggon, and who was anxious to go back again. He was one of the comparatively few Westralians who had gone to the fields and made money, as we subsequently learned, although he had had a very trying experience, most of his horses having died whilst going to one of the "rushes" some distance

from Coolgardie, but he was willing to face the music and chance it again.

Along with a few others we agreed to start in the early morning. The waggon with its six horses was got in readiness. Each of the party was provided with a water-bag, tent, provisions to last some time, and last and most important, our bed and bedding.

The water which we took from Southern Cross was hoarded with miserly care, as it was considered uncertain whether on our long journey of 112 miles, every step of the way on foot, we would get any water at the "soaks" or not. The trip took us 7 days. During the whole of this journey we never had the luck to get our face or feet washed, this being a luxury reserved for us when we would get to the end of our journey.

A big tank of water, which was kept for the horses, was also guarded with jealous care. We are afraid that had opportunity offered we should have thrown prudential considerations aside and "nicked" sufficient water to wash our begrimed faces and cool our weary feet.

But alas! opportunity never offered, and we had to trudge through the dust as best we could under a broiling sun, without a hope of getting any water to cool our parched faces until we could reach Coolgardie, and some of us who were "soft" and not in training had our feet blistered and bleeding, and our hearts were sore before we got to our destination after our 112 miles tramp from Southern Cross—the last stage of our journey—and without a spell.

At several of the "soaks" where we expected to get water none was available, and the lack thereof put us to some inconvenience. At an accommodation house on the road, where we stopped for dinner, the landlady apologised for not being able to find us water

in which to wash our faces, and informed us it was usual for travellers to "dry-blow," each other—that is, knock the dust off each other with a handkerchief, and wipe their faces with a hat.

There was a capital meal laid on the table, which was nicely served up, but none of us could obtain a glass of water, and we were limited to a single cup of tea. It must be remembered, however, that all the water being used had to be carted nearly 50 miles.

We were not sorry when we learned that we were within easy distance of Coolgardie.

COOLGARDIE AT LAST.

When we came within a few miles of Coolgardie we were met by a number of storekeepers and agents who were eager to buy the stores we had brought with us, as there was a great scarcity of food supplies, at what seemed to us very high figures. But we reasoned the matter amongst ourselves, and all came to the conclusion that if we could obtain such good prices from agents, the rates at which we could sell them ourselves would ensure us a good profit, and we did not sell.

When the Government water shaft was sighted and the long lines of diggers' tents on either side of the road were visible, we realised that we had at last reached the diggers' Mecca, where we intended to worship at the shrine of the golden calf.

The members of our party cut a sorry figure as we marched down Bayley-street in single file behind the waggon—another cargo of "swampers" (as they then called those who tramped to the fields)—our faces begrimed with the dust and dirt of a seven days' tramp, during which the successive layers of sweat and sand had accumulated and formed a cuticle, and our feet were blistered and bleeding.

There were not many stores in Coolgardie, but business was humming in those that had anything to sell. We went to a restaurant and had a good square meal and then a bath—or rather a sponge down.

Talk about the luxury of a bath! People who live in well-favored districts where plenty of water is obtainable cannot appreciate the exquisite pleasure we felt when we got a quart of water and indulged in the luxury of a "bath," or the enjoyment we extracted from the cool water out of the water-bag, wishing our throats were a mile long so that we might feel the delicious draught gurgling down all the way.

When we had time to examine the town we were struck by the splendid type of men to be seen—big, handsome, courageous fellows, the very flower of the older colonies and Mother Country. All sorts and conditions of men were there, from a real, live Scottish nobleman down to the petty thief, the daring burglar, and the "confidence men," whose portraits adorned the walls of the various "rogue's galleries" in the Eastern Colonies.

A LIVELY TOWN.

All was bustle and confusion. At least a dozen auctioneers were shouting out from their rostrums, and competition for bags of oatmeal, pounds of tea and tins of butter was very keen. There were vague rumors of fresh finds and new fields being opened up, and everyone was on the *qui vive.*

A large number of "rushes" had taken place short distances from Coolgardie, some of which had turned out well, but the bulk of them had proved "duffers." When the diggers got excited about some reported find of alluvial gold the storekeepers, auctioneers and publicans reaped a rich harvest. Not a few reported gold discoveries could well be described as "store-

keepers' rushes," the term usually applied to reported discoveries where no gold was ever found.

On such occasions picks and shovels had been sold for as much as 30s. each by public auction, and flour and stores of all kinds at fabulous prices. Despite the fact that all drinks were 1s. each, all the hotels, as well as the "shypoo" shops (unlicensed groggeries) were doing splendid business.

Pitch and toss was played in the main streets by "schools," as many as 100 men being gathered together, the police, very sensibly, we thought, in the then existing state of affairs, ignoring the presence of what in a more settled state of society would have been considered an educational factor of an extremely objectionable type. We have seen a "pot" (stakes) in the ring as big as an ordinary man will save in the old country in a lifetime, and all depending on the spin of a copper penny.

But despite all the "gaffing" (gambling), no more orderly or law-abiding crowd of men—bar, of course, gambling, the law regarding which had been for the time suspended—ever lived on a goldfield.

SCARCITY OF LADIES.

Ladies were comparatively scarce in those days. A lady passing up the street would attract as much attention as in large provincial towns the presence of well-known public men would have caused. It was rumored that at least a couple of dozen ladies were living in and around town, but the ordinary run of diggers saw none but dusky damsels.

Condensed water was selling at 1s. per gallon, and the whole of the salt water from which the fresh was condensed was obtained from the Government bore.

The stretch of level country lying below Coolgardie and known as "Fly Flat" had been the scene of some

wonderful alluvial diggings. It was pretty well worked out, although there was a lot of gold obtained occasionally.

Like all other persons, we thought the shortest road to wealth was through the medium of the "dry-blower." The alluvial industry was an important factor in the prosperity of the town and in favor with all classes. We tried it for some time and found, after the first glamour of excitement was over, that dry-blowing was in no way amusing, and so far as any of our party was concerned, neither was it profitable. Judging from the lurid language we frequently heard, comparatively few "rises" were being made that we could hear anything about.

Surely no form of labor is more exasperating than that of dry-blowing. Dust gets into the eyes, clogs the nose, fills the ears, and makes the throat as dry as a lime-kiln. We have heard old diggers expatiate on the pleasures of dry-blowing as well as the excitement, but one requires to be in ground where big slugs are being obtained, and where there is a chance of getting good alluvial. When the nimble dwt. eludes your grasp and you labor for eight hours per day without getting a speck your spirits begin to flag and you give best.

Most of our party worked on for a longer or shorter period, but, as none of them got any gold worth mentioning, the glamour of alluvial gold digging wore off, and within a few months the larger number had gone back to "God's country," as they termed the Eastern Colonies.

THE EXPECTED STORM.

Have any of my readers ever lived in a drought-stricken country, where the blue, pitiless sky is always bright, and clouds seldom come to break the glare and relieve the monotony of the hateful sunshine? Unless you have had this experience you cannot realise how anxiously the residents on the goldfields hoped and prayed for rain. At the time of our arrival on the goldfields the outlook was becoming very serious. From time to time alarming reports had been circulated respecting the water in the Government bore giving out. This was the only available supply of salt water; the fresh water in the "soaks" had all run dry. Every person knew that if the bore failed it would mean a general exodus from Coolgardie.

Whenever the sky became dark and lowering, as it did on several occasions during that trying season, and it seemed as if there was a probability of the drought breaking up, the spirits of all the goldfields residents rose. But those feelings were usually followed by the most gloomy forebodings when the clouds rolled by.

The first night we spent in Coolgardie we went to bed early, being worn out with the fatigues and excitement of our arrival. Our party had camped out in tents on the side of a hill that rises above the town. Around us were scattered hundreds of tents containing a big crowd of men, waiting till the drought would break up and they could get into the back country to prospect it for the rich alluvial gold finds reported to have been made in different parts of the "Never-never" country.

About half-past eight o'clock we were awakened by a strange pattering noise on the roof of the tent, and looking out we saw that the night was intensely dark and lowering, and rain was falling fast. The rain grew gradually heavier until it seemed as if a regular downpour was coming. Suddenly we heard a loud cheer from one of the camps down near the town, which was caught up by another party further up the hill, until there arose in concert a grand, ringing cheer of exultation at what was believed to be the break up of the prolonged drought, which was retarding the progress of the field so much.

But alas! the rain soon ceased. The black pall of clouds which had appeared so threatening soon rolled away, and the following morning the same clear, pitiless sky, which seemed brighter than before, greeted the eyes of the anxious miners who had fondly hoped that the drought had at last broken up.

THE BOGUS GOLD "RUSH" AT COOLGARDIE.

The whole town of Coolgardie was thrilling with excitement one midsummer morning in 1895. Groups of men were seen standing under verandahs, and even out in the broiling sun, discussing the sensational find of alluvial gold reported to have been made "down south someway" in that morning's local paper. The edition containing the news had been speedily bought up, and it was a common sight to see a number of excited miners grouped around one of their fellows, who would be reading out to them the stirring news respecting the great gold find. And exciting the news really was—sufficiently so, at any rate, to rouse the most phlegmatic and matter-of-fact people, let alone the hundreds of daring and resolute miners, to whom the news of an extraordinary gold find was as the scent of battle to an old war horse. "We have been credibly informed," said the journal in question, "that a kerosene tin filled with gold was brought into town from the new "rush," and every thing points to the existence of a new and extraordinarily gold field."

The wildest rumours were afloat as to the locality in which the find was situated. The only thing that appeared to be definite was that it was "somewhere down south"—but precisely where, no one knew. Parties were leaving Coolgardie at all hours of the night and day, some of them well equipped, others with sufficient supplies to last only for a few days. There was a wild, mad rush towards the vicinity of Widgemooltha, which lay south of Coolgardie. But, desp

the large numbers that were hourly leaving, the crowd of miners in Coolgardie grew greater and greater. The reports were so sensational that thousands of men from the outlying districts—Hannans, White Feather, Black Flag, Broad Arrow, I.O.U., Roaring-Gimlet, Menzies, etc.—kept pouring into the town. Many of them were on foot and carrying their "swags" and a few provisions. Others might be seen with wheelbarrows, which they trundled laboriously before them. Hundreds were in buggies, or on horse-back and camel-back; and taken altogether they were a motley crowd. But the more prudent and experienced among them wanted to know something definite before they would start out on what might prove a wild-goose chase. Chafing with delay, and burning with excitement and desire to reach the great alluvial find, the impatience of the crowd began to manifest itself ominously. Scores of men on horse-back and camel-back, as well as on bicycles, were scouring through the bush in all directions looking for the new find, and hundreds of men on foot were following in their tracks; but so far no traces could be found of the new gold discovery.

It was stated by one of the local journals that a man named McCann had given the news respecting the gold find, and that he knew the locality. Then came the unanimous roar—Where was McCann? A week of this maddening excitement had passed, and the problem appeared to be no nearer solution than ever.

The excitement was rising dangerously, and with the large number of exasperated miners swarming into town serious trouble was anticipated. Murmurs against the newspapers for publishing misleading intelligence were loud and deep; and, in turn, McCann was made the scapegoat by the newspapers. No steps had been taken by a responsible person to locate the alleged new find up to that time.

Latest News

Thursday 11

Mr Marshall who has been out with a Party of Camels reports as follows:-

"I have been out for 14 days & have travelled 400 miles trying to locate the supposed new rush but without success" "Numbers of men on camels visit the field, some with 6 months rations & disappointment with nothing the supposed find proved"

The Hon Mr Carrington & Party reported having picked a fine payweight piece"

John Marshall

Hon Secretary Gold Fields Commission

Bulletin by Mr. Marshall.

How a party was formed for the purpose and the result achieved was written by me at the time as follows:—I had been attending at the court-house as a juror, and coming down Bayley Street about 12 o'clock I saw an excited crowd of men trying to force an entrance into the offices of the *Miner*. They were, however, resolutely kept back by the members of the staff, who mustered in full force and prevented the people from gaining an entrance. This crowd had, I understood, gone the round of the various newspaper offices trying to get all the available information possible about the alleged find; but the news they had been able to obtain was of a meagre and extremely unsatisfactory kind. Now it occurred to me that this great excitement—which had been gathering in intensity for some time—was likely to culminate in some serious disturbance.

An angry feeling prevailed against the local newspapers—especially against the *Golden Age;* and to a modified extent against the *Miner*. These journals had undoubtedly published sensational reports (particularly the *Age*), without taking precautionary measures to gauge their accuracy. I watched the crowd swaying backwards and forwards for some time. I could see that the "speiling" or rough fraternity, which at that time was very strong on the goldfields, was largely represented in the crowd, and trouble was sure to ensue unless some strong measures were taken to prevent it. As hon. secretary for the Diggers' Association, I had been trying to devise some scheme to determine the accuracy of the reports, as it was quite possible that many persons would sacrifice their lives—getting lost in the bush, and also through want of food—should the mad rush continue.

A number of the baser fellows, upon whom the impress of villainy, not honest labour, was stamped, were

roughly using a tall man, who appeared to be much agitated, and whom I learned was none other than McCann himself, who was blamed for starting the "rush." Now, I thought, is the time to act, if at all. I therefore raised my voice to its highest pitch, and cried, "Look here, boys! You know that I am John Marshall, Hon. Secretary of the Western Australian Diggers' Association. Things are getting serious! Thousands of men are rolling into town. The reports published by the newspapers so far appear to have no foundation in fact, and it is time something was done to end this maddening doubt and uncertainty. I am determined to take steps to locate the alleged 'rush,' and find out whether McCann's report be true or not. I shall, therefore, call a public meeting on behalf of the Association this afternoon at three o'clock, and the matter will then be fully discussed. McCann will have to speak out and tell us what he knows, when steps shall be taken to organize a party to go out with him and settle whether the find be a fraud or not. I shall take charge of McCann and see that he turns up with me to the meeting."

The idea caught on. When I had finished speaking I was applauded enthusiastically, and then the crowd dispersed. Next, the bellman went round announcing a monster public meeting on the Reserve. Long before the time appointed an immense crowd of miners, storekeepers, etc., had turned up to watch the proceedings. Punctually at three o'clock the meeting commenced, and after a few preliminary speeches, McCann stepped up into the waggon which served as a rostrum, to make his statement. His appearance was the signal for a perfect storm of hisses and derisive cheers.

I felt sorry for the man. There he stood—a big, broad-shouldered, brawny man, with heavy dark mous-

tache, compressed lips, and pale cheeks. His manner was halting and undecided—he had apparently been drinking heavily—and he was surrounded on all sides by crowds of angry miners, hundreds of whom believed him guilty of that greatest of all crimes, the originating of a bogus rush; and these would willingly have lent a hand to "give him a lift up," had a suitable rope and the opportunity been available. Although he was nervous and agitated at first, however, as he warmed up to his subject his speech became less faltering. He briefly recounted what he had actually said, and denied his responsibility for bringing about the rush. Indeed, McCann spoke with such an air of candour and assurance that many in the crowd, even acute men, thought he spoke the truth.

I could not help admiring the man's pluck at the time, and especially in view of the fact that the whole story, as we subsequently learned, was a tissue of lies from beginning to end. He brazened the matter out admirably, but he ran a fearful risk. He actually volunteered to lead a party to the place where the alluvial gold had been obtained! His utterances were received with rapturous applause, especially when he declared his willingness to lead a party to the golden spot. Here he is at last, they thought. This is the man who will settle the great question for us! There were others who knew more than appeared on the surface; but *their* mouths were closed. It was proposed and carried that a party of four be sent out in charge of McCann to locate the alleged alluvial discovery. Subscription lists were at once opened, and in a short time sufficient funds were raised to send away a party.

At the close of the meeting McCann was handed over to my charge, as it was feared that if he got the chance he would clear out. He was on my premises

till late. During the night I rose to see if he were still in the house, and found, to my horror, that he was missing. In the morning, however, he turned up all right, looking miserable in the extreme. I tried to "draw" him, and find out what were the chances of success. I was not at all sanguine after what he hinted to me at that interview. Two buggies were engaged in which to travel to the vicinity of the place where the gold was alleged to have been found. The four members of the party who had been chosen at the public meeting were all determined men—experienced bushmen—and, withal, armed to the teeth. Also, they were under solemn vows to bring McCann back at all hazards, safe and unharmed if possible, but dead or alive. The party set out the following morning amidst the shouts and cheers of an immense crowd.

After the party started I had much misgiving as to the wisdom of the step I had taken. I was weighed down with a sense of the responsibility I had incurred. I knew there were ten chances to one that if McCann could not locate the alleged find he would be either shot or hanged on the road, as there were many desperate characters who would willingly undertake the job. During the absence of the party I interviewed the warden and inspector of police. The warden told me that in the event of anything happening to McCann whilst in the charge of the party he would hold the latter responsible for his life. This was not a pleasant assurance to receive. However, we were in for it now, and were determined to see it through. A great many alarming bulletins were now being received from different parts of the field. One of them reported that hundreds of men were starving, and a relief fund was started, which happily was never needed. It was all owing to the great McCann rush. Fortunately for all concerned, a considerable amount of rain fell about this

time, and all anxiety on the score of men perishing from thirst was thereby allayed. An Intelligence Department was organised, and all persons who came into town and could give any news were expected to call at the secretary's office.

Bulletins were posted up outside the office, giving the latest news from the seat of operations, and for a couple of weeks the place was literally besieged; thousands of men hanging about, many of them frequently calling for the latest intelligence. When a man on horse-back or camel-back rode up to the secretary's office, you would see the crowd quickly gather and wait till the news was posted. During the whole time the most intense interest was manifested, and the whole town was in a simmer of excitement. I dreaded the return of McCann with the search party, as I feared, from a hint he then let fall to me, that his mission would not be a success; and in the then temper of the people it would be hard to say what excesses might not be committed.

We did not know how long the party would be away, and did not care to keep up communication with them in case of their task proving fruitless, when it might become a matter of life and death with McCann. We trusted to the four veterans we had sent with him, all of whom were tried men, to evade the clutches of the numerous parties known to be lying in wait for the unfortunate deluder, should his attempt to locate the alleged find prove abortive.

The police rendered us every assistance. Scouts were kept night and day at the main approaches of the town to give us timely warning of the return of the party. The time passed away slowly. I was hoping and praying that the party might return on Sunday, when the public-houses would be closed, and the danger of having to contend with drink-inflamed men

averted. About six o'clock on Sunday evening a loud, imperative knock was heard at my front door, and rushing out I saw that the party had returned. A word was enough to inform me the search had been unsuccessful, and, hurrying McCann into my place, I rushed through the back premises to the police-camp, which was about fifty yards away. Soon the whole available force of police came down to protect McCann at my request.

In an incredibly short time after the arrival of the party the street was crowded. It was agreed that a report should be drawn up, showing the route travelled and the results obtained. This took nearly an hour, during which time the ever-increasing crowd was growing impatient, and the angry men indulged in knocking loudly on the door.

As time passed the cries grew louder, and threats were freely indulged in. I became alarmed for the safety of my place, as it seemed there was every likelihood of its being pulled down. Now, I had no intention after working so hard as I had done for the public good, and without fee or reward, to be made a martyr of. I accordingly curtailed the report, and sending out a big case into the middle of the street to serve as a rostrum, the party suddenly opened the door and filed out. McCann wanted to come out with us to face the crowd, and it was all we could do to persuade him to go to the lock-up with the police for protection. Had he not done so he would, undoubtedly, have been torn to pieces.

By this time the crowd was the largest I had seen on the goldfields. When the report, drawn up and signed by the members of the party, was read out showing that the alleged great gold discovery was a cruel hoax—that not an ounce of gold had actually been discovered; that thousands of men had been

fooled, tens of thousands of pounds spent, and the lives of hundreds of men endangered through the senseless babblings of a drunken fool, to whom credence had been given and authority lent by journalists who ought to have known better, the rage and fury of the crowd knew no bounds.

Then occurred a scene which positively baffles description. The excitement which had been pent up for weeks burst forth into a torrent of mingled howls of wrath, execration, and vengeance. Cries of "Bring McCann out!" "String him up!" "Pull his liver out!" "Tear him from limb to limb!" were wildly indulged in. Then one of the "spieling" fraternity sang out, "Marshall's hiding McCann; pull his place down about his ears!" I could see that the fury of the crowd was now rising to madness, and that it only required some restless, daring spirit to lead it to commit excesses of the most awful character. Now is the time, I thought, to pour oil on the troubled waters and calm the fury of the multitude, if possible, as they appear to hold me responsible for baulking them of their scapegoat upon whom they want to wreak their vengeance. I would boldly face the crowd, I decided, and appeal to the diggers, who I knew were amenable to reason.

But what a task! Never shall I forget the curious feeling that passed through me as I stepped on to the rude rostrum to face the music of that angry crowd, in whom that latent feeling of devilry, which lurks at the bottom of every man's nature, had now been fully aroused. I waited until comparative silence reigned, and then, with the feeling of one who is himself upon his trial, I briefly narrated the steps I had taken to serve the public interest, and that at great expense and considerable inconvenience to myself. I appealed to the miners not to allow themselves to be stirred up

to deeds of violence by the pimps, parasites, and "spielers" who were in the crowd. I laid particular stress on the warden's warning, given to me, that, in the event of anything happening to McCann, we, who had assumed the responsibility of sending him away in charge of an armed party, would be held liable. I blamed the newspapers for publishing such sensational reports without first taking precautionary measures to gauge their accuracy; and I also begged them not to take vengeance on a poor drunken fool. I wound up by telling the crowd that as I had taken the initiative and considered myself responsible for the whole affair, I had requested the police to take charge of McCann, and he was then in the lock-up for safe keeping. It was in their own interests that I had acted, and I urged them not to create a disturbance.

The crowd was good enough to accept my statements, and would have then dispersed had not a man got up and harangued them and awoke their fury against one of the leading newspapers. After he finished, a rush was made for the office of the journal in question with the object of wrecking it. Fortunately, a strong body of police, headed by Warden Finnerty and Inspector McKenna, and assisted by a large number of law-abiding citizens, formed a cordon round the building; and beyond breaking the windows and doing a little damage to the outside of the place nothing serious happened.

Early the following morning McCann came to bid me good-bye, and thanked me for saving his life, as he said he thought it was all over with him. One of the party told me that when they found it impossible to locate the alleged rush, and it was decided to come back to Coolgardie, McCann had repeatedly requested a revolver to blow out his own brains with. He had also

some narrow escapes on the road from parties who were desirous of "doing" for him. The party who had him in charge were determined to prevent him from committing suicide, as well as to shield him from the vengeance of others.

A few days later a large number of men, accompanied by camels, teams, etc., arrived from Widgemooltha, where they had been camped waiting for definite news. On the back of the foremost camel a gallows had been erected, on which a life-size effigy of McCann was swinging. As the procession neared the town it was joined by a large number of miners, and as these marched up Bayley-street the whole cortêge presented quite a formidable appearance. Slowly it moved up the street till it reached the square in front of the post-office, and faced the offending newspaper office, where the windows had previously been smashed. A bonfire was then lit, and the effigy, which was thoroughly saturated with oil, set on fire amidst loud yells, shrieks, curses, and cries of revenge on McCann and the offending journal. Soon it was in a blaze, the assembled crowd meanwhile whooping and yelling with delight. When the effigy was nearly burnt out a number of willing hands tried to hurl it, burning as it was, into the newspaper office in order to set it on fire. Fortunately for the whole town, however, their efforts were abortive, owing to the presence of a large force of police. The crowd then dispersed, and the last act was closed in the drama of the great "McCann rush."

The Lucky Prospector.

A good many of the prospectors in the early days made their "rises" through the merest flukes. In the district formerly known to fame as the "I.O.U.," but now called Bulong, some prospectors had taken up some ground on which there was, what seemed to them, a likely gold-bearing reef. They did a considerable amount of work on it, but evidently without any success. Some of the lumps of quartz taken out of the shaft were used to build a rude fireplace. At this fireplace these diggers had cooked their meals for many weeks, and on the long winter nights had sat round it and told stories of the strange vicissitudes through which prospectors had often passed ere they had "struck it rich," little dreaming that they themselves and their doings would be the theme of future chroniclers.

At last, tired with what appeared to them a fruitless task, and confident the reef was a duffer as they had seen no gold, although the stone looked "kindly," and owing probably to lack of skill and experience, they decided to abandon the lease, cursing the hard luck that had tempted them to waste so much time and money on a worthless property.

For a considerable time the ground lay unworked. Prospectors came and looked at it, and seeing an abandoned shaft on which a considerable amount of work had been done without, apparently, any payable results, they passed it by.

"Fly Flat," Where Bayley First Discovered Gold.

LIBRARY

One afternoon a solitary swagsman making for Hannans came across the deserted camp. Taking the swag off his back he halted and proceeded to light a fire and make some tea. Standing leisurely by whilst the "billy" was boiling, he happened to catch the glint of the sun on a glistening object on one of the pieces of quartz of which the fireplace was composed, and which to his surprise and delight he found was studded with fine gold.

After snatching a hasty meal he proceeded to peg out the ground afresh, and this he accomplished as darkness set in. There was not much sleep for the prospector that night, and early the following morning he took a number of the richest specimens and set out for Hannans. Upon arriving there and exhibiting those he had brought with him he found little difficulty in forming a small syndicate to take up the ground and work it. Within a few months it was sold for a big sum of money, and the amount he received for his share made him a comparatively wealthy man.

. . . . . .

A beautiful house has been built on the brow of a hill in one of the finest farming districts in Victoria. The owner, who was well known in the district prior to his going over to Western Australia, often tells the story of his weary search for many months for a gold mine, and how at last he struck it rich, by a mere fluke, and was enabled to retire with a moderate fortune.

Fire ! Fire ! Fire !

To the toilers in cities who live and carry on business in safe, substantial buildings of brick and stone the cry of " Fire !" is thrilling and awe-inspiring. Should, however, an alarm take place, even at night, they know that every modern convenience and contrivance are at hand to cope with the flames, and as a rule an adequate supply of water is available. If the fire has not obtained too strong a hold on the building it may be extinguished with plenty of water. It was totally different with the dwellers in goldfields cities in the early days, and even to the present time. When the firebell tolled out its wild, clanging notes, especially at night, it struck a terror into the hearts of those who had anything to lose, which had to be felt to be appreciated.

The heat at times was dreadful ; the dust was irritating in the extreme ; the want of proper food and lack of vegetables was badly felt ; the large number of deaths occurring daily through typhoid fever tried the stoutest hearts and the strongest nerves. But it is safe to say that all these sufferings combined could not be compared with the intense, ever-consuming dread of fire which constantly haunted the minds of business people who lived in the business streets of big goldfields centres.

When a fire broke out in the main streets no one could tell where it would stop. Water cost as much as 1s. per gallon, and there was only a small supply at that. It can readily be supposed what chance there was of extinguishing a fire once it got hold of a building.

The shops and houses were built of the most inflammable materials—hessian, wood, and iron—but many of them carried thousands of pounds worth of goods. When a building caught fire all that could be done was to attempt to snatch whatever was portable and valuable and then stand by and see it burnt out. There was no other method of preventing the whole side of the street from burning than by pulling down some of the smaller buildings and creating a vacant space. When it was thought necessary to do this, and sometimes when it was not, the crowd of willing workers often did the silliest things imaginable, and on more than one occasion the proprietors of buildings have refused to permit their properties to be touched by the crowd, enforcing their arguments at the point of the revolver.

The First Great Fire.

The first great fire on the goldfields swept half ot Bayley-street, Coolgardie, away, and it will never be forgotten by those who were living in that town at the time. During the early part of the evening on which this fire occurred the street had been filled with a crowd numbering at least 3000 people, who had been engaged in burning the effigy of an unpopular Perth Government official. The last embers of the effigy had scarcely burnt out and the streets were nearly deserted, when suddenly the thrilling cry of "Fire! Fire!" was heard, and in hoarse notes the cry was speedily carried all over the town. Scarcely had the firebell rang out its warning knell when the flames shot high in the air, and it was seen that the fire had secured a great hold of the building, and the whole block was doomed unless something was done to check the flames.

Suddenly the cry was raised, "There are explosives stored there," as the fire reached a large store, and an immediate stampede took place. But the places of those who fled were soon taken by others, who, more venturesome, braved the dangers of explosions and all other risks in order to grapple with the flames.

The First Great Fire, Bayley Street, Coolgardie.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

The fire soon reached alarming proportions, and it seemed as if nothing could save the whole block of buildings from being destroyed except some place were pulled down and a vacant space created. Then a wild, unreasoning desire to stop the fire took possession of the people, and a senseless demolition of property took place. With axes, picks and hammers they tore down buildings that had never been in danger, and played such pranks as would make the angels weep.

The saving of a wood and iron building that did duty for a post-office was one of the pluckiest efforts ever made at a fire. Close to this office there was a pile of buildings, composed of wood and iron, alight, and they time and again set the post-office on fire. Happily there were a few hundred gallons of water stored on the Government's premises, and men mounted to the top of the burning building and, despite the scorching heat, put the flames out at the greatest risk to life and limb.

Whilst the fire was still raging, though not quite so bad as it had been before, Warden Finnerty called a meeting at which special constables were appointed to help the regular force to watch the town and protect property. I was one of the four selected by the Warden for this duty, and the leader of each squad had to select a certain number of men to help him. The place I was put in charge of was the post-office corner, and ere my watch was closed I found it one of the most onerous and trying positions I was ever called on to fill.

The premises next to the post-office were occupied by a newspaper company, the manager of which had, with much energy and enterprise, determined to transport what was saved of the paper to Hannans, 25 miles away, where they had a printing press; so that, if possible, the newspaper might be brought out the

following day with a full report of the disastrous fire.

A very high wind was blowing, and bundles of newspapers, many of which were partly consumed, were being thrown into the cart. Some of these bundles were actually on fire when brought to the cart, and the outer sheets had in many cases to be taken off before they could be put into it. The great danger lay in the whole mass of paper in the vehicle catching fire, which, had such happened, with the fierce gale then blowing, would have in all probability set the whole town ablaze. The carriers who had undertaken to cart the goods did not seem to realise the danger, or were somewhat reckless as to consequences.

I besought the men to stop the work, but they only laughed at me. I tried to bully them, and then threatened to arrest them, but they treated the affair as a joke, and, despite my protestations, they continued their dangerous work.

I then despatched a messenger for the Warden, who promptly arrived on the scene, and he ordered one of the men to be arrested, and soon blocked the dangerous business.

When daylight broke next morning a terrible scene presented itself to the spectator. For a couple of hundred yards along Bayley-street large piles of merchandise, furniture, etc., were lying in endless confusion. What had been the scene of busiest industry the night before was now a pile of blackened ruins. Dozens of men and women were flitting about through the ghastly heaps, some of them wringing their hands and lamenting their losses, and others were silent and sorrowing; and others, again, were in a maudlin state, having drunk deeply to drown care. Some of them had been wealthy people the night before; now they were dependent upon their neighbors even for a place to sleep in.

It was a harrowing scene, and one never to be effaced from the minds of those who suffered by it. But few knew the risk that had been run that night. One storekeeper, whose premises were on the opposite corner to where the fire was raging, had sufficient detonators, powder and dynamite stored to have blown the whole town up. Happily these explosives were carted away without any accident occurring, and the extent of the danger was only realised when the party who owned them was prosecuted by the police.

Since then the conditions under which the fire fiend has to be fought have much improved. There is a fairly good water supply at all the principal centres of population, and fire brigades and salvage corps have been formed. The pioneers of the goldfields still declare when questioned that of all the ills flesh was heir to on the goldfields in the early days, the one which, to them, more than counterbalanced all others put together was the dread, the mortal terror, of fire, which kept them in a continual state of torture and made life a misery and a burden.

BATTLING FOR A HOME.

When living in America, I had often heard of the wild rushes that had taken place on the throwing open of some Indian reservation acquired by the Government for settlement, the lands of which were rich, the game plentiful, and the prospect enticing, and of the stirring scenes that were enacted with knife and gun, when the wild, mad race for land, for ranches and minerals took place. Happily for us in Australia, there are no native reservations to throw open, and even if there were Australians have never taken kindly to those cutting and carving processes which are so common in the Western States of America.

But there have been some "rushes" for land for residence areas on these goldfields that have not been altogether devoid of excitement. Owing to the pegging out of all the ground in and around the town of Kalgoorlie for mining purposes, an artificial scarcity of land prevailed, and such land as was available commanded a very high price. At last, in deference to popular clamour, the Government determined to throw open certain lands to be taken up under the Mining Act regulations for residence purposes. An advertisement appeared in the local papers announcing that on the 1st day of July, 1896, at half-past nine a.m., certain lands would be declared open to be taken up for

residential areas in blocks 66 feet wide and 165 feet deep. The mode of taking possession was by digging four trenches, one at each corner of the area to be taken up, and erecting pegs four inches thick and three feet high at each corner.

The desire to have a piece of land which they can regard as their very own, and upon which they can erect a little home for their families, is as dominant amongst the hardy goldfields pioneers as in any other part of the world. The law prevented anyone from digging trenches or erecting pegs before the appointed hour. To secure as good a position, and as near town as possible, was the main object of all concerned. The morning had been wet and cold, but, despite this, many women had camped on the ground from long before daylight in order to secure good blocks.

A little previous to the hour appointed for the throwing open of the reserve the Warden appeared on the scene, and the sights that he saw astonished him, as they were remarkable—even for the goldfields.

There was an anxious mother with a baby at her breast, drawing its sustenance from the maternal fount totally unconscious of its parents' eager desire to obtain a piece of land on which to build a home; her husband, maybe, prospecting further afield or working on a mine some distance away from town. Another woman was there with an infant in her arms and two young children, one at either end of the area she intended to take up, each with a peg in its hand ready to drop it into the holes which, in defiance of the law, she had already dug at each end of the area, and who had been instructed, when the warning "cooey" was given, to drop the pegs in the holes.

There is a cripple who—hobbling on his crutches, his face blue and pinched with the cold, his teeth chattering—waits patiently, as he has done for many

hours, for the signal to "peg out" the piece of land on which he may build himself a home.

There are at least 600 men behind the line where the Warden stands, each with his pegs and tools, ready, as soon as the signal is given, to rush off and secure the best area he can. As the time draws nigh, the Warden takes out his watch, and a solemn silence prevails for the last few minutes, as each man stands there ready to spring forward and pass the cordon of police, who are present to prevent the able-bodied men from having any advantage, the one over the other.

At last the time is up, the Warden whistles, a loud "cooey" (the preconcerted signal) is heard, and hundreds of stalwart men, who had been held in leash, broke and ran, each towards the area he had determined to select, or, failing that, the next best one he could obtain, all working as if their very lives depended upon the celerity with which they could dig their trenches, erect their posts, and legally take possession of the ground.

In a comparatively short time the work had been accomplished, and each hurried with her or his application to the Mining Registrar to get a certificate of application, showing that (say) John Smith had applied to be registered for R.A. No. —, and if no objection were lodged by any other applicant, then her or his application would be granted by the Warden, and on the payment of a comparatively small sum he would become the registered holder of the block, and have a pre-emptive right to the purchase of it after residing 12 months thereon.

In this way, hundreds of families, who before had been trespassing on leases or had no place to camp, became the owners of residence areas on which they could live, whilst possessing all the rights of ownership.

In one month from the time of the land being thrown open for residences the bush was cut down and nearly one hundred houses erected, streets had been formed and comfortable homes built where the family shrine was set up, and fathers, mothers, sons and daughters assembled in that dearest of all spots—Home, Sweet Home.

Owing to the quarrels and unpleasantnesses that sometimes took place when residence areas were being thrown open for selection, the Government have altered the mode of obtaining lands of this description, and applicants for Crown lands are put on an equal footing by means of the ballot.

GOLDFIELDS EXPERIENCE.

It is no uncommon thing on the goldfields to meet members of the wealthiest and noblest families from the old country who have been driven to seek their fortunes, sometimes through force of circumstances over which they have had no control, sometimes on account of youthful folly, compelled through having sown the wind to reap the whirlwind. Others, again, have been compelled by the curse of restlessness or desire for adventure to battle life out under circumstances that try their grit, prove their metal, and make them, after they have come through the fiery ordeal, men in the best and truest sense of the term—or else it ruins them. The avenues of success open to gentlemen who have no profession and in whom the commercial instinct is not well developed, are not many. Not a few join the police force ; others take to billiard-marking or work in hotels and restaurants as waiters, whilst not a few become labourers and miners.

I knew the son of one of Australia's greatest politicians who was glad to avail himself for a lengthened period of the hospitality of one of his father's former ardent admirers. The son of a popular

Scottish nobleman who was unable to get any work, camped in the same tent and partook of the humble meals (composed largely of damper, "tinned dog," and billy tea), provided by the son of one of his father's servants, and of which he gladly availed himself till he got employment.

Sir Henry (now Lord) Loch was a well-known prospector in the early days of Victoria, and used to boil his own billy, cook his own damper, and wear a blue shirt and white moleskins on Sunday, like all the rest of the goldfields "toffs."

Lord Salisbury, the Premier of England, if one can believe the old diggers, accoutred in a similar rig, has often jumped on to a barrel and from this rude rostrum spoken to the diggers on questions of great importance.

It is often hard for those who are fitted by education and experience to earn a crust on the goldfields, and it may be imagined how trying it is to men who have had no previous training to make ends meet.

The following incident shows to what straits men of this latter class are often put, although this is an extreme case, and demonstrates that "truth is stranger that fiction." On a vacant piece of ground in the leading street of Coolgardie an American auctioneer was selling goods. He was a smart, glib person, whose great aim was to sell purses, into which, apparently, he dropped a number of golden sovereigns, but when anyone was silly enough to buy a purse he usually found that it contained only a few pence. After running his show for a few nights business grew slack, and he tried to vary the proceedings and draw the crowd by what he was pleased to call "pudding contests," and the fun brought a big crowd to watch the proceedings. One evening a number of men and boys were ranged along the platform ready to com-

mence operations. They were a rough-looking set, but one or two seemed ashamed to face the crowd, one of whom was a youth about 20 years of age—tall, well set up, and with a superior air telling of better days.

All these were willing to exhibit their gastronomical capacities in the consumption of hot dough, through which plums had been plentifully sprinkled, and which was dignified by the name of plum pudding.

Midst howls of delight from the spectators the contest began, but ere many seconds had elapsed it was evident that the young fellow, who looked as if he had seen better days, was the likely winner. At first, he ate ravenously, huge mouthfuls being devoured by him with a voracity which showed that it was no mere freak of fun which prompted him to take part in this undignified contest, but that he was literally starving.

In a short time the huge hunk of pudding allotted to him was devoured, and, as he was the first to finish, he was declared the victor. He received the prize of a sovereign with evident delight, and as he jumped down from the stage his face beamed with pleasure.

A young man who was standing in the crowd, an employee of one of the big mining companies, was overheard to say to his companion:—"I am almost certain that it is a nephew of ——, the celebrated British statesman. I cannot be mistaken, as his brother, to whom he bears a marvellous resemblance, was with me at the University. I never thought in the good old days I would see one of the —— family engage in a pudding contest on the goldfields."

This man called the victor by his surname, who turned round, looked hard, and then attempted to get away, but his brother's friend stuck to him and would not let him go till he promised to go to his camp with him. Here he learned the sad story of his ups and downs, principally the latter, since he left his home.

A billet was secured for him, and after 12 months hard work, during which his conduct was irreproachable, he received a letter from his people in the old country inviting him to come back home, which he did, and has now become a useful and honorable gentleman, all the better for the insight he received respecting the battle of life when "doing a perish" on the Coolgardie goldfield.

THE GREAT LONDONDERRY GOLDEN HOLE.

Nowhere does the wheel of fortune revolve more quickly, "bringing chances and changes," ups and downs, than on the world's great goldfields. And among the many striking instances I have seen of the truth of this fact, during my long residence on American and Australian goldfields, none is more remarkable than the story of the party who found and sold the "Londonderry," and the subsequent decline of this once world-renowned mining property.

In the early part of 1894 the mining industry on the Coolgardie goldfields was very sick. Since the discovery of "Bayley's Reward Mine" no important find had been made; and it appeared as if there was going to be a severe set-back to the whole goldfield. The people were beginning to lose faith in its future. Land values, too, were falling; there was a severe drought prevailing, and everything looked "blue." But when things were at their worst the startling news was announced that a wonderfully rich discovery had been made about twelve miles south of Coolgardie, which aroused feverish enthusiasm, gave new life to the mining industry, raised the price of land values in Coolgardie by 100 per cent., and brought thousands over from the other states to try their luck on the goldfields of

Western Australia. The story of the men who found the "Londonderry" is one of the most astonishing on record. They were a party of six, who set out on a prospecting tour from Coolgardie in the early months of '94. They were not well provided with money to purchase an outfit; and, indeed, the buying of a horse and dray and enough provisions to last them for a few months almost completely exhausted their store of wealth. For some time they prospected south of Coolgardie, near Widgiemooltha, but without success.

At last, worn out with tramping, and miserable in the highest degree on account of their continued ill-luck, they were going back to Coolgardie determined to throw up the sponge and look for employment at day wages. The various members of the party had scattered, each one prospecting "on his own" for the time being, but all making north towards Coolgardie. One of the party, a young Irishman named John Mills, a native of Londonderry, who was not long over from New South Wales, was prospecting alone.

One evening, tired with his weary tramp and sick at heart, he lay down to have a smoke and ruminate on his ill-success, wishing himself back on his old employer's station in sunny New South Wales, and out of the country of "sin, sand, and sorrow." The huge reef which he had tested in many places, without seeing a single speck of gold, lay at his feet. Sitting thinking, in a half-dreamy, listless state, he almost unconsciously rubbed his heel against the huge, moss-covered outcrop at his foot, and carelessly looking down he suddenly caught the glint of some shiny substance on the rock. Lazily raising himself he looked to see what the bright speck was, and found to his intense astonishment and delight that it was a piece of stone full of gold. Breaking several pieces of the cap of the reef, he found to his amazement that *it was literally hanging together with gold!*

Mills' spirits, which but a moment before had been down to zero, now rose to boiling pitch, and he felt inclined to throw up his hat and shout out "Eureka! Eureka!" After having gathered a large number of specimens, he walked back to the camp, inwardly exulting, though trying to maintain the appearance of dejection. His mates were all gathered together, and were by no means in a pleasant mood. Hard living and hard luck were breaking their tempers, and the conversation was far from cheerful. Some of them had wives and families in other states who were waiting and longing for good news from their bread-winners.

After supper was over Mills said: "I have something to show you, mates. Wait a minute till I go and get it." So saying, he left the camp, and returned in a few minutes with his hands full of stones. "What do you think of them?" he yelled, as he dumped the lot down on the gunny sack which did duty as a table-cloth. As his mates picked them up and looked at them, they found that the pieces of quartz were literally held together with gold. And when they received Mills's assurance that there appeared to be an unlimited quantity of the same incredibly rich quartz, the delight of the members of the party knew no bounds.

They pressed Mills to lead them to the treasure-spot that night, but he pointed out the futility of such a proceeding, as he would be unable to find his way back in the dark. There was but little sleep in the camp that night, and long before daylight the old horse was hitched up and the party were ready to start, moving away with the first peep of day. After some difficulty the exact spot was located, and on reaching the place where Mills had obtained the specimens the night before they found that half the truth had not been told, for, as they broke off pieces of quartz and with hammer, wedge, and pick delved down,

Back from the Londonderry.

THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

the quartz became richer and richer.

After the first wild excess of joy at finding such a treasure had passed away, the party settled down to hard work, and for weeks toiled like galley slaves, night and day, calcining the stone in an open furnace, and then dollying it by the rudest and most primitive methods—methods which entailed the hardest of hard work.

At first, the novelty of the work and the extraordinary richness of the stone kept them from wearying; but after a while, when the novelty had worn off, the dollying of the stone became a terrible task. John Mills himself assured me that after a time the sight of gold grew positively hateful to him, so monotonous and hard was the toil associated with its extraction. How arduous their labours were may be inferred from the fact that in a few weeks they had dollied out about 8000oz. of gold, valued at £32,000—and that with the rudest appliances.

So far they had not applied for a lease of the precious ground, and their only fear was that any day a prospecting party might drop across them, and probably peg out the place they were working. On the other hand, if they did apply for a lease of the ground, some of the men whose business it was to watch applications when they were posted up outside the Warden's Court (as was required by law), and to find out where fresh discoveries were made, might make enquiries and find where they were—which was the last thing they desired. At last their fears of discovery prevailed, and after a solemn council had been held it was determined that Mills and Huxley should go into Coolgardie and get Mr. W. H. Lindsay, a mining agent there, to apply for a lease of twenty-four acres. No hint whatever was to be given of the richness of the property, and the two selected for this

duty were well tutored in the tale of woe and distress which they were to pitch to the mining agent, with all the artless eloquence they could command.

Accordingly, Mills and Huxley marched into Lindsay's office one forenoon and told him a pitiful tale of the wants and privations they had gone through, and how they had come on a likely place, where the reef was narrow and the stone *might* yield half an ounce to the ton—probably a little more. The main reasons why they were willing to stay and give the place a trial were, firstly, that the horse they had was nearly knocked out; the feed was fairly plentiful, and water not far away. Also they were tired of knocking about the country. They had, therefore, agreed to take up a gold mining lease of twenty-four acres, but being extremely poor men, and having spent nearly every shilling they had in prospecting, they hoped the agent would make the fees as light as possible.

But there was a curious air of intense eagerness about the men—an evident overpowering desire to take up the ground, and a tremendous anxiety that no informality should be made in the application. There was also such a parade of their poverty—a matter about which the genuine miner, be he ever so poor, is extremely reticent—that the agent thought there must be something behind it all. So he mentally resolved, whilst applying for the lease now known as the "Londonderry"—to make a search and see whether this party of hard-up miners could really be found—if for nothing else than to congratulate them upon having determined to battle further with fortune in spite of their poverty.

A few days after this, Lindsay set out to find the "Londonderry." He searched all day, but was unable to locate the place, and that night had to sleep out without blankets. As the night was intensely cold, he

cursed his curiosity for leading him out on such an errand. Next morning, however, he was lucky enough to discover the place. Almost the first thing he noticed was a large open-air furnace for calcining ore; and he had been on too many mining camps not to know what *that* meant.

The party, of whom the whole members were present, were, of course, extremely sorry to see him, and could not help showing how vexed they were. In answer to his inquiries, they told him they had struck a small leader which returned them a little gold; and then they tried to bluff him. But Lindsay was far too shrewd and observant to be easily bluffed; and after he had got about 5 per cent. of the truth out of them, they pledged him to secrecy. Then, bit by bit, the whole truth leaked out, and the agent discovered what a magnificent property they had, and that there were *eight thousand ounces of gold in the strong-room!*

But such an extraordinary find could not long be kept quiet. One of the party, an old man, and rather infirm, took sick, and went into Coolgardie, where, as a relief from the strain to which his mind had been so long subjected, and to give vent to his overpowering sense of joy, he got wildly drunk, flashed his gold about the town, and made a clean breast of it all. When the news was confirmed, the excitement in town became perfectly frantic, and the whole population rushed to see the great "Londonderry Golden Hole." A little later the country along the supposed line of reef was pegged out for miles.

The following day we went out and searched round the "Golden Hole" to find, if possible, even a colour, but were unable to see the slightest trace of gold. It was hard, indeed, to realise that such a wonderful amount of gold had been obtained from the small hole shown to us, with such an apparent lack of favourable

indications. Ere the day closed, however, we were fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of John Mills himself, who was far and away the best and most generous of the party. He showed us some magnificent specimens, the like of which had not been seen since the early days when Bayley discovered the great Reward Mine.

I shall never forget the excitement which thrilled the whole community, nor the feelings of renewed hope which were experienced by all when it was authoritatively stated that gold valued at between £30,000 and £40,000 had been lodged in the bank for safe keeping. The following day (Monday) some magnificent specimens were exhibited at the bank, which fairly astonished the diggers.

The desire to purchase this phenomenally rich property became an object of supreme importance to the representatives of speculative syndicates already on the field. There was a good deal of competition to secure this rich prize, but negotiations were successfully conducted by Lord Fingall, who was resident on the field, and ultimately purchased the property for, I believe, £100,000. It was subsequently floated in London and Paris for £750,000. When negotiations for the sale were finally arranged, the "Golden Hole" was covered over with a strong plate and then sealed. Thus it lay for many months, unopened, the subject of many a wonderful story in the newspapers throughout the world. The re-opening of the "Golden Hole" took place some considerable time after the company formed to work it had been floated, and everything arranged with much pomp and circumstance. It was thought possible that if the golden treasure which had been so freely taken out from a shallow depth continued to go down, it might even lead to the depreciation of gold values!

The eyes of the whole world were on John Mills' "Golden Hole," and mining men were quite prepared to see gold sent away from it by the ton. But after a few days' work in the Londonderry—then considered to be one of the greatest treasure stores in the world—it was found, to the utter amazement and dismay of all concerned, that the kernel had been taken and only the worthless shell left. People looked at each other in blank astonishment when the news was made public. It was darkly hinted by those in authority at home that the "Golden Hole" had been tapped and its treasure spirited away. Surely, they said, it could not be possible that the wonderfully rich mine, which had turned out so many thousand ounces of gold from a small hole—which had caused the mining world to ring with its fame and to look forward with eager hope to the payment of enormous dividends, could have "petered out!"

Alas! it was only too true. The "Golden Wonder of the World" was a wonder no longer; its matchless riches had been exhausted, and one of the biggest mining companies had been floated on what was little better than a burst bubble. When the exact position of affairs became known, and the full truth realised, such a storm of indignation, vilification, and abuse was let loose upon the heads of the vendors, promoters, mining experts, and everyone connected with the flotation as has rarely been equalled.

The effect of this blow upon the entire district was disastrous in the extreme. Hundreds of claims that had been taken up and worked on the strength of the great Londonderry finds, were abandoned, and that after hundreds—and in some instances thousands—of pounds had been spent upon them. Public confidence in the permanence of the goldfields was rudely checked, at least for a time; "Golden Holes" were looked upon

askance, and the mining industry severely crippled. The failure of the Londonderry to come up to the high expectations raised had an immense effect upon the Coolgardie goldfields. It is safe to say that every ounce of gold afterwards taken out of the Londonderry district cost £20. The original holders got out of the State with their gains, enriched as they had been "beyond the dreams of avarice"—ordinary avarice, that is.

Although a considerable time has elapsed and the high hopes respecting the Londonderry have not, to any considerable extent, been realised, yet it is confidently predicted by those who ought to know that there may yet be a big future before it as a dividend payer, and that the disappointments which have been experienced in the past may be, to some extent, counterbalanced by the success to be achieved in the future.

THE MOUNT BLACK "RUSH."

One of the greatest and most disastrous "rushes" that ever took place on the goldfields in W.A. was that generally known as the "Mount Black Rush," which, however, owing to its distance from any of the centres of population, attracted very little attention at the time.

A considerable amount of alluvial gold had been obtained in the Lake Darlot district, an alluvial field 300 miles from Kalgoorlie, which was nearly worked out. There had been close on 2000 men working in the district, all eager, pushing, enterprising men, who were willing to go to any part of Australia, no matter what the cost or risk, in search of the yellow metal.

Rumours respecting the finding of gold some distance from Lake Darlot had been in circulation for some time; but no definite information was available as to the exact locality where it was found. A well-equipped party had come into the township for supplies, the members of which were unusually reticent —even for diggers. They maintained a mysterious air, and would give no satisfaction as to where they had come from or where they were going to. News was circulated through the camp that the party was getting gold, and that the new find was at Mount Black.

The rumours were so persistently circulated that they were ultimately accepted as true, in the then excited state of public feeling, and in a single night over 1000 men struck camp and hurriedly left for the supposed new discovery. Some of these were mounted on horseback, others on camelback; some, less fortunate, were carrying their swags on their backs, with supplies of food and water; others had wheelbarrows loaded up with tents, provisions, etc., which they wheeled in front of them, with rude harness made of ropes thrown over their bodies to assist them in distributing the weight of their loads.

Never since gold had first been discovered by Bayley had a more motley crowd stampeded for a "duffer" rush than that which set out for Mount Black. The privations some of them had to endure were dreadful, as they were inadequately supplied with both food and water. None of them knew the way to the supposed new find; whether it was at Mount Black itself or a hundred miles further on, or whether there was any gold obtained or not.

Every man was seized with an insane desire to be first on the supposed new field and get gold at all hazards, even though they risked their lives in the attempt.

When the foremost men, who were mounted on horses and camels, reached Mount Black they found neither tracks of prospectors nor any indications of persons having recently been there. They soon proved that the rumours respecting the discovery of gold were unfounded, as the geological formation of the country showed conclusively that it was not even an auriferous district.

A few days' search around the country amply demonstrated this fact, and as soon as this became generally known the horsemen and camelmen disap-

Carrying Supplies to New Gold "Rushes."

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

peared, making their way back as fast as possible either to the Murchison or to Coolgardie.

When the men who had left Lake Darlot on foot arrived at Mount Black, having followed up the tracks of the horsemen, they found themselves in cruel straits. Their supplies were nearly exhausted, as they had reckoned on being able to purchase all they wanted from the travelling storekeepers they expected would be on the new find, and it was impossible to purchase at any price either food or water.

The journey to the Mount had been trying in the extreme, but it would be simply impossible to describe the sufferings on the return journey. Just fancy what they had to do! With little food and scarcely any water they had to tramp back 110 miles to Lake Darlot.

It was a wild, mad rush, in which the fittest journeyed at a high speed towards their goal, discarding every pound of stuff they could—blankets, razors, knives, clothes. Every article, except what they wore and food and water, were thrown away to enable them to get back to their starting point. The strongest and fittest survived, but what became of those who were not fitted for the journey can only be conjectured. How many perished will probably never be known, but as the country gets settled the skeletons of many will be found—the remains of fine, stalwart fellows who perished in the great Mount Black "duffer" rush.

THE PREMIER'S FIRST VISIT TO COOLGARDIE.

Early in the history of the goldfields Sir John Forrest, then Premier of Western Australia, paid a visit to Coolgardie. At that time there was a feeling intensely hostile to anything and everything belonging to the State—a feeling which has been, happily, removed. This feeling amongst the diggers was due, in a large measure, to the belief that they were not properly treated; that the burden of taxation was being increased on the products they largely used, and that they were being exploited for the benefit of the "gropers."

When the news was received in Coolgardie that the Premier purposed visiting the town, it was not believed, as the idea of Sir John troubling himself about the diggers' wants and aspirations was too good news to be true.

"The Premier is not game to face the music," was the opinion generally expressed by all living on the fields. But, despite all the fears to the contrary, the Premier was game enough to

> "Beard the lion in his den,
> The Douglas in his hall."

I had previously heard Sir John speak to intensely sympathetic audiences in other parts of the State, but always in a hall, and I was afraid of his capacity to speak in the open air, if he spoke at all.

There were a good many who thought that he would not get a very cordial reception, but all doubts were at once set aside, when he drove down Bayley-street, preceded by two mounted troopers. The people received the Premier without any outward and visible demonstration of pleasure, and his reception might be described as cool, if not cold.

This was a rare experience for Sir John, who did not realise that, in the then state of public feeling, an undemonstrative, non-commital welcome was a tribute to his personal character—paradoxical as such a statement may appear.

The Premier would have to show that he was deserving of their confidence, and prove the stuff he was made of before he could expect to win the applause of the diggers. He appeared, however, to take his reception somewhat to heart.

But the generous hospitality of the Municipal Council soon dissipated this feeling in flowing bumpers of champagne. After the civic reception was over, everyone was anxious to know if the Premier would address a meeting, there being no hall in which he could speak, and all recognised that he was a courageous man, and the fact that he had travelled over the place where the goldfields were being opened up many years before any other white man, proved him to be a man of lofty daring, a good bushman, and a sterling pioneer. That was all very well in its place, was the openly-expressed opinion of the diggers, but now that he was Premier would he do his duty to the goldfields, relieve the goldfields burden—which even at that early date was being piled on—and seek to encourage the mining industry?

At last an authoritative statement was made that the Premier had consented to address an open-air meeting at De Baun's hotel at eight o'clock. The

opinion respecting the Premier rose in the estimation of the diggers when the news was made public, and everybody was on the tiptoe of expectation.

Not a few of the "lambs" thought that there would be a bit of fun, as they intended to submit Sir John to the process termed "heckling" by Scotsmen. When night set in a buggy was placed in front of the hotel, brilliantly lit up with lamps, and the largest crowd that had, up to that time, been assembled on the field, was standing in front to give the Premier a welcome, for they considered his pluck was worthy of the highest praise. As the hour appointed drew nigh, the Premier, accompanied by the Mayor, mounted the buggy, and he was received with loud cheers mingled with hisses and cries of dissent. After a short, preliminary speech by the chairman, Sir John Forrest rose to address the crowd amidst loud and prolonged applause. His bucolic appearance and bluff, hearty manner told in his favor, but he could see from the start that his audience was out of sympathy with him. It was such an audience as the Premier had never previously faced—containing some of the most daring, resolute, and intelligent men on the face of the earth, the very cream of the Eastern States and the older countries. It was an audience that might well have put the ablest man on his mettle.

I was afraid, from what I knew of the Premier, that he had attempted a bold experiment. He had never had any previous experience of open-air speaking, and was ignorant of the little diversions sometimes indulged in by diggers when in a playful mood at such meetings. Sir John felt ill at ease, and as he had a severe cold, caught whilst camping out the previous night on the road from Southern Cross to Coolgardie, everything was against him. He braced himself up, however, and started to speak in a pleasant, taking

way, but had not proceeded far when a slight disturbance occurred.

A practised open-air speaker would have held on his way and taken no notice of the interruption, but the Premier stopped and the noise increased. Cries of "Go it, Jack!" "Give it lip!" and "Heave it off your chest, John!" and other advice of a like character was freely tendered to the speaker. But it was an herculean task, which soon got beyond the powers of any individual to manage. On the whole, however, the Premier came out of the ordeal as well as any experienced person could have thought possible, although it was neither satisfactory to the speaker nor to his audience.

One lesson, at least, was learnt by the Premier, and that was, that a speaker must have a strong nerve, a stout heart, a loud voice and plenty of experience, who attempts to face the music of an open-air meeting with an audience largely composed of men hostile to the speaker.

The next goldfields speech made by the Premier and the wonderful success he achieved is told in the following chapter.

SIR JOHN FORREST'S TRIUMPH.

From the time that the Premier first addressed a goldfields audience until he visited Coolgardie again a considerable time elapsed, during which a good many changes had taken place. Many of those who were new chums on the occasion of Sir John's first visit had become accustomed to Western Australia, its people, and its ways. Much had been done by the Government in the interim for the goldfields, which paved the way for a more cordial feeling towards the Premier than had prevailed on his former visit. It was therefore under different conditions that the second visit was carried out. A considerable amount of expense and trouble were gone to in order to give him a fitting welcome, and to, in some measure, wipe out the memory of his previous visit.

When the Premier arrived in town he was met by representatives from various public bodies, and his welcome was of an extremely cordial character. His good offices on behalf of the fields had been credited to his account, and when he consented to address a meeting in the Theatre Royal everyone predicted that it would be a success.

In the evening a big meeting was held, and long before the appointed hour the place was packed to suffocation. As I sat on the platform and looked down on the sea of eager, expectant faces, the utmost good feeling prevailing, I could not help contrasting the former meeting in the open air with the one about to open, and thinking how fickle a crowd was. As Sir John Forrest came up the passage to the platform, preceded by the chairman, and followed by the leading

residents of the town, a storm of applause greeted the Premier, which must have been particularly gratifying to him after his former experience. After the chairman's remarks, the Premier rose to speak, and a large number of the audience also rose to their feet, but, owing to the loud and long-continued applause, it was some time ere the Premier could begin his address, although there were many who showed their disapproval in nc unmistakable manner.

Ere Sir John had spoken five minutes, it was seen that he was in good form, and his enthusiastic reception, dashed as it had been with expressions of dissent, had put him on his mettle. The Premier commenced his address in a dignified fashion, and paid a high tribute to the marvellous energy and daring that had raised a fine town of what had, at his last visit, been a mere village situate on an arid desert. He thanked the audience for the magnificent reception they had accorded him, all the more welcome because totally unexpected. Gradually warming up, and feeling he was carrying his audience with him, he waxed eloquent. His subject then took possession of him as he recounted the steps the Government had taken to conserve the interests of the residents of the goldfields. Then he began to unfold the gigantic scheme they purposed carrying out for the good of the fields—the bringing of a river of water from Mundaring, which would provide an adequate supply for all purposes, serving alike the needs of the thousands of families that would settle on the fields, the hundreds of batteries which would ring out their cheerful music in the ears of a contented people—turning the desert into a smiling land, the home of a peaceful and thriving population.

This statement was received with rapturous applause, and when the Premier had ended his peroration he received quite an ovation.

It seemed to me that this was not, could not be, the same man to whom I had previously listened in the open air. The man who had spoken at the previous meeting had closed it amidst a murmur of discontent, openly expressed, having been lame and halting throughout, and making himself heard with the greatest difficulty.

The man I saw before me was flushed with success; his speech had been rapturously applauded, and he had spoken with an earnestness, a power and an eloquence which none of his former audience would have considered it possible he could possess. What, I thought, during the after speeches, has been the potent influence that has thus turned the halting speaker into an eloquent orator, the hero of the meeting, the statesman with a comprehensive grasp of affairs and a wide knowledge of men and things? The conclusion I arrived at was this: That past services to the goldfields people had produced a feeling akin to gratitude in the minds of his hearers, and turned them into a sympathetic audience. The promise of the great boon he intended to secure for the goldfields in his gigantic water scheme had won their support and approval, and the amount of practice and training he had received since his last visit had fitted him to take a better grasp of his subject; had taught him to give utterance to his thoughts in a more terse, comprehensive, and eloquent manner than he had previously been able to do.

It appeared to me one of the most conspicuous examples I had seen of the resolute courage of a man who, not born with the greatest of all gifts for a public man—"the gift of the gab"—had, undeterred by past failures, conquered many difficulties, and compelled even those who were most strongly opposed to him to recognise the undaunted courage and ability of the Premier.

DANGER, DISEASE AND DEATH.

The truth of the saying that "familiarity breeds contempt" was strikingly illustrated by the careless fashion in which funerals were conducted in the early days of the goldfields. Deaths were fearfully common amongst the youngest, the strongest, and the healthiest; yea, it seemed as if lusty vigor were the passport to death, and the weak and ailing secured comparative immunity from disease. The mortality was greatest amongst those who came from New Zealand, and who comprised the very flower of the manhood of that great colony. Nor was it to be wondered at that such a state of affairs should exist. Comparatively few, even of the business people, had closets, and to nine-tenths of the diggers—of whom there were a large number camped round the town—such conveniences were unknown. Outside the immediate town boundaries was one vast latrine, and the consequence was that typhoid, that dreadful scourge of all new goldfields, was rampant.

The number of deaths grew so great that funerals were often seen without any mourners, the driver of the cart carrying bodies being the only one in attendance. There was great difficulty at times in obtaining materials for coffins. These were often made of packing cases, which were for a long time sold by weight,

being sixpence (6d.) per lb., and they were weighed up as carefully and charged as faithfully as if they had been sides of bacon, instead of pieces of waste wood. The colouring, with which most of the coffins were blackened, gave out, and instances have been known of coffins bearing such legends as "Stow away from boilers" and "This side up with care"—the marks on the packing cases of which they were originally composed.

There was no Municipal Council, no Cemetery Trust, or authority of any kind outside the police, to see that the dead were decently interred. Everything was left to the undertakers, and sometimes through drink, sometimes through familiarity with death, they became callous. It was seldom that graves were sunk more than four feet deep; at times much less than that, and on occasions funeral parties had to wait till the graves were partly dug. One glaring instance of this kind took place where orders had been given for the grave to be ready by four o'clock. About half-past four the cortège arrived and, owing to the deceased being a well-known man, large numbers of mourners were present; but, to the disgust of the mourners, they found the men who were to have dug the grave lying beside it in a helpless state of intoxication. Some of the friends of the deceased had to doff their coats and set to work to dig the grave of their late friend. As the ground was tough and hard to dig it was long after dark before the grave was considered deep enough to decently inter the body.

A grave scandal was once caused by the news that a body had been buried at such a shallow depth that a butcher's cart passing through the cemetery, which was then unfenced, had broken a large piece off a coffin. There was no regular staff of grave diggers, and in the then state of the labour market, sometimes

"Willy Willy," or Goldfields Scavenger.

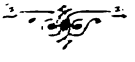
men could be found for this work, sometimes not. When, however, the Progress Committee was formed in May, 1894, all necessary precautions were taken to stamp out the fever. Afterwards, when the Municipal Council was formed, the whole country for two miles round Coolgardie was cleansed; the most perfect sanitary system, under the then conditions, was adopted, and Coolgardie became one of the cleanest towns in the State. Through the efforts of the first Protestant minister on the fields (Rev. Thomas Trestrail), a Cemetery Trust was formed. A large piece of land was obtained from the Government as a cemetery, which was fenced in and divided into sections for the different denominations. A caretaker was appointed to look after it, keep a register of those who were buried there, and in a short time the Coolgardie burying ground was as well kept and attended as any in Australia.

THE MIGHTY DEAD.

As one wanders through the cemeteries at the various mining centres, one is impressed with the large number of graves of young men between the ages of 19 and 30 that they contain—the very flower of the Eastern States—who have paid their lives as forfeit for their energy and courage. As one stands by their graves and considers how much the goldfields are indebted to them—how much only those who have gone through the mill know—one almost instinctively says:—All honor to that pioneer band who, braving dangers, battling with difficulties, overcoming obstacles, despising hunger, enduring thirst, have opened up the way for their brethren; have cleared the tracks that have become the goldfields highways; have searched or and unearthed treasures to be enjoyed by those who follow them.

Their names may not be emblazoned on the scroll of fame, their brave deeds may be forgotten, or remembered only by the loving ones who treasure and mourn their loss.

But such have not lived in vain! The present generation and generations yet unborn will reap the benefit of their courage and enterprise, and their example will not be lost. And so long as Great Britain and Greater Britain's sons follow the example of those who have preceded them, and prove their willingness to dare, and suffer, and do and die, they will continue, as they have done in the past, to lead the van of civilisation and remain the dominant race of the earth.



THE FIRST GOLDFIELDS WEDDING.

The Coolgardie goldfields had been opened up for some considerable time ere any young man had found time and opportunity to get married. One day, however, about the beginning of July, '94, it was rumored that one of the few young ladies who then graced the rough and ready mining camp of Coolgardie had finally consented to join issue with one of the young men on the fields, and peg out a life lease on the great matrimonial lead. The news was received at first with a considerable amount of incredulity, as it was thought unlikely that any man would be fool enough to "get spliced" on a new goldfield, no matter how bright the prospects might be.

But for once the diggers were wrong, as preparations on an extensive and elaborate scale, and commensurate with the importance of the occasion, were being carried out. At last the eventful evening arrived, and diggers from all parts of the field rolled into town to honor the union. The hotel where the ceremony was to be performed was crowded to overflowing early in the afternoon, and the fun waxed fast and furious until the invited guests arrived. With champagne at 25s. per bottle, whisky 12s. 6d., and beer 3s., it can easily be understood how expensive a really first-class thirst might prove to a man of good liquor-carrying capacity. But it was not every day that the first marriage on a big mining field took place, and the

most effective method in which the diggers, who had the money, could show their appreciation of the importance of the occasion was by having a right royal drunk. The wit of the crowd declared that "the bride, Miss Clara Saunders, was the lady who acted as pioneer in the matrimonial market for her sweet sisterhood; and Mr. Arthur Williams, the bridegroom, was the gentleman who paved the way that in the near future hundreds of other men would have to tread." The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Thomas Trestrail, the pioneer minister of the fields. The greatest interest was evinced by the hundreds outside as well as by the lucky half hundred inside. My own recollection of the marriage is somewhat marred by the thought of the squeezing I got in my frantic efforts to obtain a good view of the ceremony through the window, and the pains that were in my legs for hours after through having to stand in a cramped position. After the ceremony had been performed three wild, ringing cheers were given by the assembled diggers, who pressed forward to congratulate the happy pair who had thus acted as pioneers and opened up the matrimonial market, and given a good lead to the pushing, enterprising young men on the fields to follow.

A large number of friends sat down to breakfast, which, however, was as *recherche* as the somewhat limited means at the command of the best cooks in town would permit.

There was no lack of liquids, from the ruby claret to the fine old Scotch whisky—the former of which had been brewed in a shaft down on the Fly Flat at Coolgardie, and the latter at Duncan Macleod's whisky mill at the 90-mile road distillery. In both cases the bottles had labels that closely resembled those on stuff hich was the "real Mackay."

Considering the scanty means for beautifying themselves at the disposal of the ladies, some of the dresses worn at the wedding would have done credit to their sisters in the big eastern cities. All the dresses were described in peculiarly happy and well-known mining terms by "Smiler," the funny *Miner* man:—"The bride wore a rich cream quartz-coloured silk, with orange blossom outcrops. Miss Hickey was dressed in a reddish substance, with sandstone-coloured leaders running round the main body, looking very nice; so much so that many a digger wished he could get a miner's right and apply for a perpetual lease or the freehold of this young lady. Mrs. Faahan wore a pale milk quartz combination, with gold outcrops running across the full breadth of the face. Mrs. Burns appeared in a charming outfit, the main body being blue trimming all down the footwall side, with laminated leaders of dark slate colour. Miss Brennan set envious teeth on edge as she waltzed round in a slate-coloured robe, the principal outcrops being decorated with diorite-coloured stringers, and other indications of a highly-pleasing character. She moved round the room with a native grace which was charming, and which made many a digger wish that, even for the nonce, he owned so good a claim. Miss Kennedy wore a kaolin-coloured silk, and was much admired, whilst Miss Smith was arrayed from peg to peg in a slate-coloured material, relieved at the throat by a white quartzite band. Miss Dwyer, in a rich limestone-coloured creation, relieved at the datum points, near neck and shoulders, looked as pretty as a picture."

Invited and uninvited guests alike held high carnival, and those who did not dance inside with the ladies tripped the light fantastic toe with their mates outside, and the loving-cup was freely filled and as

freely quaffed until it seemed as if some of the diggers were not sure whether they were dancing at their own wedding or some other person's wedding. The easy manners then obtaining in the camp became still less constrained, and all danced with an energy and vim which, in many cases, made up for the lack of grace and elegance.

All were in the highest degree satisfied with the opening of the matrimonial market, and the wedding was pronounced to be a "howling success." Many of the dust-begrimed and sunburnt diggers swore that as soon as the fickle jade Fortune smiled on them, and they could afford the luxury of a wife—provided suitable partners were obtainable—they would follow the example of Arthur Williams and peg out claims of their own, and strike good prizes in the Benedict's Sweepstakes.

THE AMENITIES OF GOLDFIELDS POLITICAL LIFE.

The man who essays to represent a mining constituency in Parliament must have brawn and brain, a stout heart, leather lungs, keen intelligence, level head, and, above all, a thick hide, and he who lacks any of these essential qualifications will sooner or later come to grief. It is all right so long as a member runs with the popular party. They will lustily shout his praises, but woe to him if he should dare to run counter to the crowd. This difficulty was strikingly exemplified in the Kalgoorlie electorate. The member for Kalgoorlie was a comparatively young man—a native of Queensland, of Irish extraction—and one who possessed in a marked degree those peculiar gifts which fit a man for the stormy scenes of political life. He had sat as member for Coolgardie for some years and had, on the whole, been as popular as could have been expected with the "crowd." Amongst his many accomplishments was the gift of song, and on many important occasions he had charmed the ears and won the applause of his constituents by his vocal efforts, his *piece de resistance* being "Molly Riley." He was also a forcible and fluent speaker, who, on occasion, gave his opponents the "rough side" of his tongue.

But Mr. Moran had been guilty of the unpardonable offence of not seeing eye to eye with his constituents. At a time of great public excitement, when the

"Ivanhoe Venture" trouble was stirring the minds of all classes of the community, he had, in a very open and high-handed manner, it must be admitted, flouted the wishes of the big majority of his constituents, and defended his own rights and those of the "Venture Syndicate" (of which he was the managing director) with an energy, a determination, and a pertinacity which provoked the admiration of many even of his political opponents, whilst it aroused his enemies to the verge of political madness. For a couple of years Mr. Moran had not been able to address his constituents, and knowing well the hatred and distrust with which he was viewed by so many of them, he was careful not to give them an opportunity to vent their ill-humour on him. But the turn of the political wheel had lifted him into the position of Minister of Lands. A dissolution had followed a few days later, and the two weeks' old Minister was called upon, willy nilly, to face the music of an angry crowd who had been "nursing their wrath to keep it warm." It was a situation fraught with issues of considerable importance, not merely to the goldfields, but to the whole State. The issue was also of great moment to the young Minister, as the reception he received at the hands of his constituents might make or mar his political career—send him back to Parliament to fill the honorable position he had acquired by hard work, or consign him, for a time, at least, to political oblivion. Little wonder, then, that on the evening of April 16th, 1902, there was a dense crowd gathered round the doors of the Miners' Institute, which was the largest building on the field, to hear the address of the member for the district. Shortly after seven o'clock the hall was opened, and in a few minutes it was packed with an intensely eager, excited crowd numbering about 700 souls, comprising some of the

A Gold Diggers' Meeting.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

brightest and keenest intellects in the Commonwealth, as well as some of the hardest "cases" to be met with anywhere. Fortunately for Mr. Moran—how fortunately was only realised later on—a considerable number of lady supporters obtained places on the platform. The interval between the opening of the hall and the appearance of the speaker was taken up with the singing of patriotic and other songs, and the audience appeared to have sung themselves into a fairly good humor. But Mr. Moran's appearance was the signal for one of the most terrific outbursts of political passion and feeling the writer has ever seen—hisses, hoots, derisive cheers, howls, yells, cock-crowing, cat-calling, continuing for fully a quarter of an hour. At last the chairman was permitted to make a few remarks introducing Mr. Moran, who, on coming forward to speak, received such a reception as simply baffles description. "Ladies and gentlemen," were the only words that could be heard when, in a hundred different insulting ways, the speaker was informed that he would not be listened to. Mr. Moran was understood to say that he defied the unruly mob, and was prepared to stay till midnight, but he would address his constituents, as was his bounden duty. In bitter irony some of the audience struck up "Molly Riley," which was sung with immense gusto, and then "John Brown's Body"—only the party whom they wanted hanged was a Westralian, not an American politician.

One of the city fathers tried to get the member a hearing, but he was, metaphorically speaking, "squashed" by the audience. For some time longer the uproar continued, when the stalwart form of Malachi Dwyer—one of the labour leaders who had played an important part in the alluvial struggles—was seen approaching the front of the platform, and as he was known to be a strong political opponent of Mr.

Moran's, his appearance there created some surprise, and for a moment there was a lull. Yet, giant as he was, a well-known leader, with a voice like a fog-horn, even he failed to secure Mr. Moran a hearing. He (Dwyer) was heard to say that he strongly advised the audience to allow the speaker to pronounce his (Mr. Moran's) own funeral oration, and that of the party he represented. But though this sally was greeted with loud cheers, it did not in any way alter the manifest determination of the meeting not to permit the member to be heard. A slight lull in the disorder took place, and Mr. Moran was heard to say:—"You call yourselves Australians and Britishers, and you won't give a man a bit of British fair play. Are you not ashamed of yourselves, you howling, jeering, cowardly pack of curs? If you were 10,000 strong I would flout and jeer and defy you all." The speaker's voice was again lost in "Molly Riley," and Mr. Moran, in a series of graceful gesticulations, kept time to the music—a proceeding which did more credit to his musical "ear" than his judgment. Taking advantage of a short period of calm, the speaker said:—"You are calling me hard names; 'turncoat,' 'traitor,' and all the other opprobrious epithets you can think of, but none of you can call me a 'cocktail.' You cannot put me down or keep me down. Charlie Moran is not one of that sort. I have been blamed for many things—(Cries of 'And rightly so'). I have been accused of having tried to pass the odious 10 feet regulation—(Cries of, 'So you did, Charlie; you cannot deny it')—but I was one of the first to condemn the regulation, and the Government which passed it into law." At this point of the proceedings singing was renewed, and several scenes of disorder took place, and it seemed as if the audience were losing all control of themselves.

Order, however, was after a time somewhat restored, and the speaker, nothing daunted, continued:—"I must and shall be heard in my own constituency. It is simply a few rowdy roughs from the Boulder who are kicking up a noise. The Kalgoorlie people have too much sense to do so." It seemed at this stage that nothing could prevent a riot taking place, and for nearly 15 minutes the meeting looked like Bedlam let loose. Suddenly a man appeared on the platform with a decanter of sherry and a box of cigars, and Mr. Moran, after helping himself to a fairly liberal supply of wine, lit a cigar and shouted, "We will turn this into a smoke social." An attempt was here made to induce the ladies to leave the platform, which, however, proved unsuccessful, as one loud-voiced individual was heard to declare, "We can't do anything while the petticoats are about!" Mr. Moran at this stage seemed to be goaded past endurance, and in a passionate outburst he said:—"It is the Irishmen who are howling and screeching like hyenas; the same Irishmen who are crying out for Home Rule. You Irish brutes! You are a disgrace to Ireland, yelling and howling more like fiends than intelligent men." One of the alluvial leaders tried hard to get at the speaker, but, unable to accomplish this, he mounted a chair, and a dumb pantomime took place, which indicated that the bellicose leader would like to damage the orator of the evening, but the latter wisely refrained from accepting such a pressing invitation. Another alluvial digger shouted out, "Charlie! You are digging your own grave." Drawing himself up proudly the member said, "If I have to go down politically, I shall go down with my colours flying." This roused the fury of the speaker's enemies, and several of the audience tried to get to the front to do him violence. At last one sang out, "Come down,

902725A

Charlie, you pup, and I will take it out of you." The fighting now became general, and a determined effort to reach the front was made, but Mr. Moran's supporters did their best to maintain order, whilst a rush was made for the platform by the now almost frenzied crowd of diggers. Some of them succeeded in forcing their way to the front of the platform amidst the crashing of forms, the breaking of chairs; and, judging by the terrific yells, it seemed as if a serious riot would take place and the member be torn to pieces. But, happily, the ladies came to the rescue and presented a bold front to the foe, assisted by a body of men equally determined that the candidate should be protected at all hazards, and the besieging party were badly beaten back. It is, however, safe to say that had the ladies not lent their physical, as well as moral, support, the defenders of the platform would have been badly worsted and the hall wrecked.

Even after these exciting scenes had been enacted Mr. Moran was still game to face the music, but it was pointed out that the electric light would be turned off at twelve (midnight), and, should the meeting be prolonged till this occurred, in all probability great loss of property, and, probably, of life, would ensue. The meeting broke up in the greatest disorder a few minutes before twelve, having lasted for nearly four hours, and thus closed one of the most extraordinary political gatherings ever held in Australia.

Other meetings were held in different parts of the town, but there was no further display of political rowdyism. When polling day came round it was found that the young Minister had been badly beaten by his sternest political opponent—the nominee of the Labor Party—despite what, in all fairness, must be described as one of the gamest fights ever lost in Australian politics.

A SPECIAL CYCLIST CHASED BY DINGOES.

There is probably no country in the world where a practically unknown and arid desert was so rapidly traversed, opened up, and developed as that which lay around the great Coolgardie goldfields. The remarkable rapid progress made was, in a large measure, due to the use of the bicycle, which was the favourite mode of locomotion. The special cyclists who carried the express mails to the outlying centres and those who took despatches to the mines, many hundreds of miles away, had often rough times and trying experiences to go through. The danger arising from meeting with hostile blacks ,away from the haunts of men, alone, and oftimes, unarmed, was in some districts rather great. The only recorded instance in which a cyclist was attacked by animals took place in the latter part of '94, between Dundas and Coolgardie. Probably few men on the field were better known than J. H. C. Bamblett, who was special cyclist, and carried the special mails to Dundas. When nearing the "Forty-Mile Rocks" on one of his trips he thought he heard a peculiar noise behind him. At last he stopped his bicycle to find out what this noise was, and, to his intense astonishment and horror, discovered that he was being followed by a pack of dingoes, which were

close to his heels by the time he had mounted his bike. He was quite taken aback, and could scarcely believe that he saw aright, as such an experience was entirely new on the fields; but the snarling of the brutes soon roused him to a sense of the danger of his position. Mr. Bamblett was an expert rider, with an extraordinary development of "calf," and he soon got going in good style. The road was smooth, and the dingoes did their best also, as the cyclist often had them close to his pedals. The race went on between cyclist and dingoes for several miles, and it seemed to the former that the latter would have a decent meal out of his lunch-bag, if not off himself. At last that part of the track was reached which crosses the end of Lake Cowan—a great saltwater lake when rain falls, but which, at this time, was perfectly dry, with a smooth, hard surface admirably adapted for cycling, and Bamblett went on at a rate he had never previously attained. The going appeared to be equally good for the dingoes, as they kept up the pace, although it was a regular cracker. For a few miles this terrific speed was kept up, until one by one the dingoes got tired out and had to retire baffled and beaten.

During the whole of the race the cyclist knew that, barring accidents—such as his tyres getting punctured, or a stick getting into his wheel, or losing his pedals or his balance—he could easily win the race for life in which he was engaged. When he was well away from the brutes Bamblett got off his bike, nearly done up with his tremendous exertions. By this time night was rapidly approaching, but there was a good full moon, and he did the last twenty miles of his journey by moonlight, reaching his rendezvous for the night after a most exciting and trying day's work, the like of which had never been previously experienced on the olgardie goldfields.

"BAIL UP!"

OR

ROBBERY UNDER ARMS.

What? Robbery under arms! In broad daylight and on a busy thoroughfare? It surely cannot be true! Yes, it is quite true. One of the most daring criminal deeds in the history of any Australian State has just been successfully accomplished on the Boulder Road, 1½ miles from Kalgoorlie, and the robber has got safely away. Such was the startling news brought into the police office by an excited cyclist who had "scorched" in from the scene of the robbery on the morning of the 3rd day of May, 1899. Two mounted constables, who were waiting to go out, and whose horses were standing ready for the road, received hasty orders to proceed to the spot, and, running to get their revolvers and rifles, they vaulted into their saddles and galloped to the place indicated by the excited cyclist. The sight of the troopers riding at such a furious pace aroused the curiosity of several cyclists, and, riding ahead, as the road was all downhill, they speedily outdistanced the troopers. Some way ahead there was a crowd of men in sight, and on approaching it was found that a large number of them were watching with much interest a horse that was lying on the ground, apparently in its death throes, a bullet wound in its head, from which the blood was flowing freely. The story the two men told, who had been in charge of the money, was sensational in the highest degree. They were employees in the office of the Lake View Consols Gold-mining Co., and had gone into Kalgoorlie early in the morning to get the fortnightly pay for the employees of the company. By special arrangement

with the Union Bank they had received money amounting to nearly £5000—£100 in silver, which was put into a yellow brief bag, and the balance in notes and gold, which was deposited in a tin box. After they had received the money they put it into the buggy and drove leisurely along the Boulder Road, which is always busy with people going to and coming from the Boulder to Kalgoorlie. They never for a moment thought that there would be the slightest danger, as large sums had been carried along that road for five or six years without any attempt having been made to stick up those in charge. Secure in the belief that there was no danger, no special watch was kept, and it can be imagined the surprise the two men received when a man suddenly rushed into the middle of the road and, in a thrilling and imperative voice, commanded them to "bail up," at the same time catching the reins and checking the horse. He lifted his Winchester repeating rifle and fired point blank at the beast, the bullet lodging in the front of its skull, disabling it completely. The horse then dropped and the desperado said, "Hands up, or I will blow your —— brains out." The attack was so sudden, so utterly unexpected, that the two men were completely nonplussed, and, under the potent influence of the loaded rifle, which was levelled at their heads, and whose power had already been so dramatically displayed, they did as they were directed. "Throw me out that bag," was the next peremptory command, and seeing no chance of escape and being completely at the mercy of the ruffian, they reluctantly complied. The robber, who was a thick-set man, wearing a dirty blue handkerchief (in which holes had been cut to see through) round his neck, then walked round to the side of the buggy where the bag was lying, and, seizing it, he edged away to the eastern side of the road,

Gold Escort, 1895.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

always, however, keeping the muzzle of the rifle pointing towards the occupants of the buggy till he got some yards off, when he hastily crossed the road and a short distance away mounted a rather small, black horse, which had been tied up behind a rude brushwood shelter. Before, however, he had time to mount his steed a number of persons had arrived on the spot, and one of them, who was driving a baker's cart, tried to stop his horse, at which the robber declared that he would blow his brains out if he did not desist. When he did mount and ride away several ran after him with a view of finding out where he was going. But although he rolled in his saddle in a very unhorseman-like manner, and appeared to maintain his seat with considerable difficulty, heavily weighted as he was with his rifle and the bag of silver, he managed to get away safely. When the two troopers arrived on the scene the direction in which the robber rode off was pointed out to them, and they galloped away after him. They had scarcely gone a mile when they came across the horse which the robber had been riding, which seemed none the worse for the service it had performed for its daring rider. Instead of pushing on in pursuit and leaving the horse to take care of itself, they seized the horse and led it back towards town, and on their way they met the Sub-Inspector of Police, who indignantly demanded why they had not followed the robber up—a very sensible and pertinent question under the circumstances—and commanded them to let the horse go and start in pursuit of the desperado. The movements of both the robber and the police had been watched by some women, who subsequently declared that the latter were within a hundred yards of their quarry when they found the horse and turned back, as he was then running at a rapid rate and making for an abandoned shaft on the "Belle View" lease. The

Sub-Inspector searched the spot and found a black coat lying on the dump of the shaft, in the pockets of which were 13 cartridges for a Winchester repeating rifle and a blue handkerchief with white spots, which had been ingeniously knotted together and holes put in it for the eyes, so that it could be used as a mask. The shaft was proved to be over 400 feet deep, and had 240 feet of water in it, so that it was found impossible to discover what the robber had thrown down it, although it was conjectured that the rifle with which the horse had been shot was deposited there. All the police in the district were requisitioned to come to the search, and the country around was scoured for miles, but the psychological moment had been let slip and all their efforts to find the daring miscreant were in vain. It was found that the saddle and bridle had been stolen from the Boulder a week previously, and the horse the night prior to the sticking up taking place. Everything pointed to the robber having an intimate knowledge of the district and of the mine officials, as well as a reckless courage and audacity almost unparallelled in the history of Australian crime.

What, however, must have been the chagrin of this enterprising highwayman to find that the bag he had been so eager to secure, and for which he had risked so much, contained only a hundred pounds in silver, whilst the tin box (which had lain concealed at the back of the buggy, covered only by an old dust rug) contained nearly £5000 in gold and notes? And, notwithstanding all the efforts of the police, the perpetrator of this daring outrage was never discovered.

Ever since this occurrence the money for the payment of wages on the big mines is carried out of town under police escort, the troopers being armed with rifle and revolver, making it almost impossible for such desperate deeds to be even attempted again.

FORTUNE, BUT ALAS! TOO LATE.

The hardships endured by the pioneers on the Westralian goldfields would have been well nigh intolerable had it not been for the hope that ere long, perhaps, they would make a "punch"; that fortune would smile on them, and then, in some far-off land, listening to the singing of birds, the gentle ripple of sparkling waters, in sight of masses of rich-hued flowers and surrounded by a loving wife and bonny bairns, they would forget for ever the cruel disappointments, the dreadful thirsts, and the pangs of hunger through which they had passed in their quest for gold.

These bright dreams of future happiness were realised by comparatively few, and alas! how many fell by the wayside—some even within sight of the goal they had striven so hard to reach?

Amongst many sad cases that I have seen of this kind, probably that of Harry Noble was one of the saddest and most pathetic.

Harry was a young man of fair education, good disposition, and a descendant of one of the best families in England. The son of well-to-do parents, he had been brought up to no trade or profession, and his lack of experience and that kind of education that fits a man for the rough and ready battle of life on an Australian goldfield, was soon made painfully apparent to him.

But, although his lot was a hard one, he never complained or dreamt of going back to the lap of luxury. He struggled along manfully—dry-blowing, working as a surface hand on the mines, and then underground, until he was licked into shape and became a fairly expert miner.

Being sober and industrious and eager to push himself forward, he had saved a few pounds, and, accompanied by some of his mates, had gone prospecting in the back country. For over 12 months the party had endured the dangers, discomforts, and hardships that fall to the lot of the battling prospector. But fortune did not smile on them. Their money was nearly all spent, their provisions exhausted, and it seemed as if they would have to give up prospecting and go back to hard graft on the mines. One day, however, when everything looked as black as possible, they found a reef which gave good surface indications, and after working it for some time they proved it to be a really good property.

Now commenced the struggle to keep possession of their mine until it could be sufficiently developed to induce some mining speculator to purchase it. Some months elapsed ere they could persuade anyone to inspect, with a view of purchasing it, as it was situate a considerable distance from the principal mining centre. During this time the members of the party were nearly on the brink of starvation. When, at last, a mining expert was persuaded to visit the mine, they found to their intense delight that their estimate of its value was a correct one. The expert made them an offer to purchase on behalf of a London company, which they agreed to accept. A deposit was, after a few days, paid down on the transaction, and it was arranged that the balance of the purchase money should be paid within three months of the deposit

Typical Gold Diggers' Camp.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

being handed over. For several weeks Harry, along with his mates, worked on the property, when one day he suddenly took sick. For ten days he lay in his camp, attended only by his mates and given such rude remedies as were available, unwilling, as he was, to trouble his mates to bring him into town for medical assistance.

Growing worse, however, his comrades had him removed to the hospital, where he appeared to get somewhat better. One Friday afternoon, after Harry had been in the institution for a week, his mates came to see him, with smiling faces, to tell him that the balance of the purchase money had come out from England long before it was due, and that the sum of £3000 had been placed to his credit at one of the local banks.

Thoughtlessly and heedlessly they had told the news to Harry, in the absence of the nurse, who had temporarily left the ward to get some medicine for a patient, little dreaming how dangerously ill he was. The flushed face of their comrade, which told of fever, suddenly blanched, and, burying his face in his hands, he wept.

The nurse then came into the ward and eagerly beckoned them to retire, and she met them in the lobby and said :—" Poor boy! The doctor has no hopes of his recovery, and he himself knows he is dying." His mates pleaded with the nurse to let them see their dying comrade once more, promising faithfully not to excite him. Stealing back into the ward again they stood by his bedside in silence. Opening his eyes he saw them and made as if to rise, and then said :—" Oh mates! it is hard, hard luck! I have battled for years on this field and nearly perished twice for want of water. Once I was nearly killed by the blacks, and now when I have made a rise and my loving mother

and one dearer than a sister are waiting at home in Victoria for my return, I have to die and leave it all. When you go back home tell my mother I fought the battle of life bravely. I kept on the square and did nothing to disgrace myself or the family. Tell my darling Amy, who expected to have been my wife on my return from W.A., that the memory of her love and goodness have kept me from yielding to temptation, and that I shall renew my tryst with her in Heaven."

. . . . . .

Exhausted by the excitement of speaking, he closed his eyes and lay silent for a few minutes. Then a bright smile lit up his wasted features, and one of his periods of delirium intervened, and his intellect wandered. Suddenly his voice rang out clear and musical:—"Jim! Jim! Don't you see that golden city the old pastor used to preach about? I see it, Jim, and oh! how beautiful it looks. I see the lovely palm trees waving their hands! I hear the babble of a hundred brooks, and the song of a million birds. Oh! how different from the "Never Never" country we passed through. They have shifted the old homestead there, and there are my father and mother, Amy, and my sister Bess, and my brother Dick, and I'm back from Westralia with my fortune made. Oh! mother——." The seraphic smile that had lit up his face faded away, and ere the sentence was finished he sank back exhausted. The nurse motioned his mates to retire, and, after a long, last look, they left the ward. A few hours later the spirit of the hardy prospector left its earthly tenement. The following morning his comrades stood by the grave of him who had been their true and faithful companion through many a weary month; who had borne the heat and burden of the day, but whose sun, alas! had gone down at its meridian.

THE "OPEN CALL" EXCHANGE.

One of the most stirring sights on the goldfields is the big "Open Call" Exchange at Kalgoorlie. During the boom time close on 100,000 shares have been sold in one night. When there was an excited market it was a stirring sight to see the "Call" crowded to suffocation with all sorts and conditions of men, eager for gain, game for speculation, and willing to back their opinion with their bottom dollar. Surely no more fascinating study can be found than to watch the play of passions in that theatre where the actors are eagerly striving to gain the great prize—GOLD. Here the poorest, as well as the wealthiest, may speculate, if they have the money, to their heart's content.

Large sums are here lost and won nightly. Look at that thin, sharp-faced man. He is reckoned one of the shrewdest buyers on the field. Next to him sits a bare-faced boy, scarcely out of his teens, with bright, open face. He, also, is a big scrip buyer, and no young man in Australia of his age has put so much money through his hands as he has done.

There is another type of speculator in that stout, manly-looking young fellow in moleskin trousers, which are well patched. He is working on a lease, not far from town, and washes his own clothes, cooks his own food, and deprives himself of even the barest necessaries of life so that he may indulge in his favourite form of gambling in scrip—for such it in reality amounts to.

Take a stroll through the building before the calling starts. There are about 600 to 700 men present—standing, sitting, lounging about, most of them with pipes, cigars, or cigarettes in their mouths. The atmosphere reeks with smoke and a thousand other foul odours. The busy hum of voices is heard, and as you pass from group to group you can hear the various diggers discussing the latest quotations for stocks; the most recent gold finds, giving and receiving tips respecting developments in the mines, all busily engaged in trying to gauge the market value of the various mining shares likely to be offered for sale, and ready to either buy or sell should a favorable opportunity offer to do business.

As the auctioneer mounts the rostrum the hum of voices ceases. An earnest, serious look characterises nearly all the people present, with here and there a face intensely occupied with the business on hand. The attention of the crowd is given wholly to the auctioneer, and it is only when he indulges in a sally of wit, or cracks a joke, that they appear to relax. The bidding goes on at a steady rate, and the clear notes of "Scotty" Linton's resonant voice rise and fall with a rough grace which is felt by all.

Sometimes the amount of money turned over in a week is almost beyond belief, and as the ordinary Stock Exchange discourages, and, as far as possible, prevents its members doing business in the "Open Call," the bulk of the business is transacted with the working classes.

But the intense desire for gain is sometimes relieved by flashes of pathos and gleams of kindness, showing the better and more humane side of the diggers. On one occasion when I was in the Open Call and business had been going on merrily for about an hour, the auctioneer suddenly stopped, and, in a neat little

New Post and Telegraph Office, Kalgoorlie.

Old Post and Telegraph Office, Kalgoorlie.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R
L

speech full of pathos, recounted a tale of suffering being endured by a young man who was resident in Kalgoorlie, and who had been at work on the mines, but whose sight was failing, and the doctor held out no hopes of its recovery. He told how the unfortunate man's wife and family were waiting and longing for their bread-winner, but alas! he was without means of support, unable to work, and had, probably for the last time, seen the faces of those he had left behind. Surely, "Scotty" said, that noble spirit of charity, which characterised the Anglo-Saxon race all over the world, would not be found wanting amongst an audience composed of gold diggers—a class of men which had always been distinguished for their generosity. They would, he felt certain, raise sufficient funds to take the poor sufferer back to his home in an eastern State, and let a ray of light into what seemed doomed to be a dark and dreary life.

The auctioneer gave a handsome donation himself, and his example was quickly followed by others, until, with sums ranging from £5 to a 3d. piece (the gift of a poor miner, whose last coin it was), the sum of £158 1s. was collected. When the clerk who had been taking down the amounts read out that such a large amount had been obtained, the assembled diggers gave three ringing cheers.

The mate of the unfortunate man then rose, amid a prolonged silence, and, with a voice choked with emotion, thanked the crowd for their magnificent collection.

The "calling" then began afresh with as much vigor as ever. Little scenes like these show that the hardy, resolute miners preserve beneath their somewhat rough and rugged exteriors the softest of soft hearts and the kindliest of kindly natures.

THE GREAT GOLDEN MOUNTAIN.

In the early part of January, '95, the diggers on the Coolgardie goldfields were raised to the highest pitch of excitement by the news that a wonderfully rich gold discovery had been made by a party of prospectors about 150 miles from Coolgardie, at a place called Mount Catherine, surpassing anything that had ever previously been discovered in Australia. It was stated by what were considered to be competent authorities that the gold-bearing stone in the outcrops alone would be close on 10,000 tons, all of which would pay handsomely for treatment.

This news, of itself, was sufficiently stirring; but when it became known that the prospectors had had the evil fortune to be arrested, at the instance of a former mate of theirs, on a charge of wilfully murdering a party of blacks, the truly extraordinary combination of circumstances aroused the most intense interest on the goldfields. In November, '94, a small prospecting syndicate had been formed in Coolgardie, consisting of eight members, six of whom went out prospecting and two of whom paid a certain amount every week in lieu of their services. The party left Coolgardie on 1st December, and went to the Eucalyptus rush, where three members remained, whilst the others went to Pindinnie. The three who remained were Michael Gerald two brothers called

On the Track.

Merry. Whilst out fossicking Gerald came across the track of camels, and his curiosity being aroused he determined to track them up and see if any prospecting was being done in that locality. Whilst doing this he came to a patch of dense scrub, into which he plunged, and soon afterwards emerged and saw in front of him an immense hill of quartz. Napping at the boulders shed from the outcrop he found to his intense astonishment and delight that some of them contained nice, shotty gold. Continuing his prospecting along the line of reef he reached a bold peak, which towered far above the surrounding country, and was amazed to see the rich character of the stone throughout. Almost staggered by the magnitude of the reef and its wonderful richness, he made his way back to the camp as quickly as possible, and, to the delight of his mate, showed the pieces of quartz he had brought with him, which were thickly studded with fine gold. His two mates, however, refused to accept his statements respecting the size of the reef, thinking that his imagination had run away with his judgment. But little time elapsed till the three mates were soon on their way to put the report to the test. When they reached the spot they found that the story told by Gerald was not exaggerated, but that the reef was 14 feet in thickness, outcropping right to the top of the mountain, which was about 70 feet high. The whole reef, as far as could be ascertained, was of a payable character, and they reckoned that at least 10,000 tons were available for crushing purposes. The camp was speedily shifted nearer the treasure spot, and the work of dollying out the gold was carried on with a small pestle and mortar; and even with this primitive mode of extraction they made good wages.

They also discovered another reef some distance away, which they christened the "Daisy Bell," an

this also gave exceptionally good returns. These discoveries were made on the 7th of January, 1895.

A few days before this, on the 27th of December, 1894, a party of natives had, in the absence of the three mates, robbed their camp at Eucalyptus, carried away with them the stores, ammunition, clothing, etc., and speared some of their horses. When the prospectors returned and found the camp looted they were in a tremendous rage, and vowed vengeance upon the aboriginals for their daring thefts. They started in pursuit and tracked the blacks up, hoping to cut them off before they reached the main tribe and recover the plunder, but they found, after following up their trail for some distance, that they had joined the main body of the tribe and were mustered in great force. They, therefore, saw that to attempt to interfere with such a large number would be dangerous, so they determined to return for reinforcements and horses and punish the natives for the serious thefts. At Pindinnie they met with a man called Robins. This man, after hearing their story, offered to accompany them, and, being well mounted, the young men soon found the trail and followed up in pursuit of the aboriginals and overtook them, and the pursuit appears to have been continued till New Year's Day. What occurred during that time is not clearly known, although the most horrible rumours of reprisals and barbarities being wreaked on the blacks were freely circulated, and these evoked a storm of indignation amongst the miners.

On the 7th January the discovery of Mount Catherine took place, and on the 8th Robins arrived there also, where, however, he found that all the good ground had been pegged out by Gerald and party. On the day of Robins' arrival Gerald and Syd. Merry left for Hannans to apply for the lease of the "Mount

Catherine," and on the following day Robins found out they were gone and followed them to Hannans. Upon arrival at Hannans Gerald and party applied for a lease of the "Mount Catherine," and when Robins came in he found that he was too late to make an application for the ground. Gerald, meanwhile, had gone to Coolgardie, and was again followed by Robins, who met him there and had a terrible row with him. Robins, however, was pacified on receiving Gerald's assurance that the "Daisy Bell" lease was not applied for by him. Robins then appeared to be satisfied, and left for Hannans per the coach with the object of applying for the "Daisy Bell." Gerald then informed Merry of his quarrel with Robins, and, apparently, advised Merry to get a horse and ride on ahead of the coach and put in an application at the Warden's office for the lease of the "Daisy Bell." Merry carried out his instructions to the letter, and when Robins arrived by the coach he found he was too late. Finding that he had been foiled a second time, Robins waited till the return of Gerald from Coolgardie, and a desperate battle took place between the two men. Apparently smarting from what he considered a grave injustice, Robins returned a second time to Coolgardie, where he interviewed the police, and told one of the most sensational tales into their ears in connection with the discoverers of the "golden mountain" that was ever listened to. The local journal—the *Coolgardie Miner*—publishing an interview with one of the members of the syndicate, who had not been out with the party, said:—"Blacks had been killed wholesale, without regard to age or sex; that infants had been taken from their mothers and the brains battered out of their living bodies upon the rocks; innumerable outrages were perpetrated on the women, and the unfortunate savages slaughtered ruthlessly."

The publishing of these details sent a thrill of horror and indignation through the goldfields which had never been equalled. The average Australian digger keenly resents injustice of any kind to either white or black, and the opinion throughout was that if these atrocities could be proved the perpetrators should be severely dealt with. It was quite evident that the informer was actuated more by a spirit of revenge than with a desire to bring the evil-doers to justice. But the details were so circumstantial, the severest cross-examination did not make Robins vary from his story that the police could not do other than make a most searching investigation into the facts.

Sergeant Stokes and a trooper were sent out to make inquiries and arrest the accused. The arrest of Bill Merry was soon effected along with Gerald, and the former's brother gave himself up to the police as soon as he heard that there was a warrant out for his arrest.

On the morning of the trial a vast crowd of diggers was present to hear the evidence, and the keenest interest was taken in the proceedings until they terminated. The Warden of the Coolgardie goldfield was on the Bench, and the three accused were charged with murder "in shooting a number of aboriginals." In answer to the question, "How do you plead—guilty or not guilty?" they all answered, "Not Guilty!"

The only direct evidence was that given by Ned Robins, who deposed that a number of shots had been fired and several blacks were killed. He admitted, on cross-examination, that "when we went out that morning I thought they were going out to shoot blacks!" Ben, an aboriginal, said he heard five or six shots fired. Sergeant Stokes deposed that a trooper and he went to the place indicated by Robins, and found the remains of a native in the crevice of a rock.

There was a hole in the groin of the skeleton. They also found the remains of another human being near where they discovered the previous skeleton, which were believed to be those of an aboriginal. The case concluded about noon, but the Warden held that there was not sufficient evidence to commit the accused for trial, and discharged them. The informer was remanded in custody as being *particeps criminis*, but no evidence being forthcoming he was subsequently discharged.

Thus ended one of the most dramatic and exciting incidents that has ever taken place on the goldfields of Western Australia, which stirred to their very depths the feelings of the diggers on the fields, and that is, even to this day, the subject of many an unfavourable criticism. All the members of the party reaped rich rewards from the sale of the "Golden Mountain," and some of them retired altogether from the fields to what, to them, was a competency.

THE FIRST MURDER ON THE GOLDFIELDS.

Never since Marshall, when washing sheep on the Californian ranch, picked up the glittering object as it was being carried down the flume, and found that it was a nugget of gold, has a great goldfield been opened up with less serious crimes, fewer quarrels, and smaller loss of life than the great Coolgardie goldfields. Men were taught to respect the law at all times and under all conditions, and for years there were no murders, and crimes against the sanctity of women were unknown. What was known as the Bardock murder took place in the early days of the goldfields, but the mystery in connection therewith was never cleared up.

The first murder that took place on the fields, where the criminal was brought to justice, occurred on the 11th of January, 1896, when an Afghan named Goulam Mahomet killed a countryman of his own named Tagh Mahomet, a well-known camel proprietor and carrier, in a very big way of business, and the junior partner in the well-known firm of Faiz and Tagh Mahomet. Tagh was a fine specimen of the Afghan race—tall, broad shouldered, with a laughing face and splendid teeth. He had been in the employ f Sir Thomas Elder, of South Australia, for some

"Captured." A Native Murderer.

years as a camel overseer, and, when the gold was found, came over to W.A., where the bulk of the carrying trade soon fell into his hands, and he and his brother made money rapidly.

A dispute had once arisen between the two men, and threats of vengeance appear to have been made on either side. Early on the fatal morning there were two Afghan priests in the mosque, paying their morning devotions to God and Allah, his prophet. Shortly before sunrise they were joined by Tagh Mahomet, who, as was his wont, knelt upon the floor, with his face towards the rising sun, in silent prayer. Just as the golden orb showed upon the horizon, Goulam Mahomet came softly into the mosque and knelt down close behind his intended victim, and, after engaging in a short prayer, drew out a revolver, and, placing the muzzle close to Tagh's back, fired, and his victim, uttering a low moan, sprang forward in his death throes and fell on his side. The murderer coolly rose and said aloud, "I am quite satisfied now," and stalked out of the mosque.

The priests and other Afghans who had heard the report ran to the poor man's side, but they could see that he was quite dead, the bullet having touched a vital spot. The murderer, who was not molested in any way by his mates, walked up the street, accompanied by another Afghan, who went for the police, whilst Goulam waited at the junction of Ford and Bayley-streets to be arrested. After some time a constable was found, who took the murderer in charge and conveyed him to the lock-up.

On being brought before the court the prisoner treated the whole proceedings in a half contemptuous sort of fashion, and expressed not the slightest regret at what had occurred, merely stating that if he had not killed Tagh he would have killed him (Goulam).

When placed on his trial before the Supreme Court at Perth, he maintained the same cool, unconcerned demeanour. He appeared to have made up his mind as to the fate that was in store for him, and bore up in a stoical fashion. At the trial, where his counsel fought bravely for him, he was sentenced to be hanged. The execution took place at Fremantle Prison on the 2nd day of May. The prisoner slept well and ate heartily up to the morning of his execution, and betrayed no sign of fear at his impending fate. On the scaffold he addressed a few words to those whose duties led them to attend the execution, and he tried to justify his conduct by stating that if he had not killed his victim he (Tagh) would have killed him.

The doomed man then shouted, "Aye Allah Fallah" several times, and, whilst kissing the Koran, in an ecstacy of rapture, the fatal signal was given, the bolt drawn, and the murderer was launched into eternity.

ROBBERY UNDER ARMS.

In the early days of the goldfields, when the escort used to leave Coolgardie every week with parcels of gold varying from £5000 to £50,000 in value, it was a common remark to hear passed by the diggers, who usually gathered to watch the gold being taken out of the banks and delivered into the custody of the mounted troopers, that "some day an escort will be stuck up, and then the mettle of the police will be tried. They look very fine with their loaded carbines and revolvers; their nicely-blackened riding boots"—which were a standing reproach to the diggers, as no one thought of polishing his boots;—"their pawing steeds, and themselves dressed in smart, well-fitting uniforms; but they will be tried some day and probably found wanting."

We were always expecting to hear of the gold escort being stuck up, and, truth to tell, we were always disappointed. Troopers with whom I have conversed have told me that there was a part of the road, where it led round the foot of granite rocks, which afforded plenty of shelter, and at which, if ever, the escort would be stuck up.

When the escort reached this spot the troopers always got their arms ready for a scrimmage. It was, however, through no lack of men—bold, daring and unscrupulous enough to attempt such a crime—but rather from the want of means of escape with the booty in the event of its being obtained. It would have been necessary to employ horses or camels to carry the gold away, and these could have been easily tracked by the natives through any part of the bush. Besides, there were no watering places outside the few that were along the main road.

So many gold escorts had come and gone without any attempt to molest them that everyone was lulled into a feeling of false security.

Fancy, then, the excitement that thrilled the people of Coolgardie when one Friday afternoon a horse and buggy was driven into town at a furious pace, the animal in a lather of sweat from hard driving, and when they stopped in front of the police station and one of the occupants jumped out of the buggy and ran into it, a big crowd soon gathered.

The news soon spread that two men, named John Mitchell and John Paull, who had been taking the money for the wages of the employees on the "Burbanks" mine out in a buggy, had been "bailed up" by armed men; the monies they carried, amounting to nearly £800, had been taken from them, and the robbers had got away with their booty.

Shortly after, Inspector McKenna, accompanied by two troopers and the black tracker, left the station yard armed to the teeth. They had not gone far from town when they met the men who had been robbed, and the police soon found out that the story told them was only too true.

The two men had come into the bank and received the money for the wages and were driving home in a

buggy, each with a bag over his shoulder in which the money was placed. They were both eating grapes out of a bag and chatting away in a friendly manner, taking no notice of what was going on, when, suddenly, three masked men jumped out from an ambuscade near the road. One of them grasped the horse's head, and the others covered the two men with rifles, and told them as they valued their lives not to stir. They then fired a few shots at the buggy to intimidate the occupants, smashing the spokes of the wheels.

The attack was so sudden, so unexpected, and the occupants were armed with no more deadly weapon than a penknife, that they immediately surrendered, judging that, under the circumstances, discretion was better than valour. One of the robbers then led the horse off the road into the scrub, and the others commanded the two men to hand over the money they had or they would shoot them. Each reluctantly handed up his bag, with the best grace possible under the circumstances. The ruffians then proceeded to bind Mitchell and Paull, and they then drew a gunny sack over the head of each, and finally tied them to a tree.

A solitary traveller, who was carrying his swag on his back, hearing the gunshots and thinking something must be wrong, went to see what was going on. When the robbers saw the man they pointed their guns at him and made him throw up his hands above his head, and he was also gagged and tied to a tree with twine and then blindfolded.

The robbers then said they would leave one of their number behind with orders to shoot the first one who attempted to move. After they had been gone some time one of the captives managed to get the bag over his eyes, and he could see the robbers had all decamped. He then wriggled himself out of the cords

with which he had been imperfectly bound, and let the others loose.

They then proceeded towards the town at their best possible speed, but had not gone far when a buggy was seen approaching them with three men in it.

The occupants of the buggy were rather surprised to meet three men who were shouting, gesticulating, and motioning them to keep back. When they got close enough one of them shouted out, in thrilling tones, "Go back for God's sake! They are shooting everybody down the road."

One of the men in the buggy said, "These fellows are ratty! They must have been having a big spree." The buggy was stopped, however, and the occupants could see that some extraordinary occurrence had taken place. Then a man, whose frame was trembling with fear and excitement, his face ghastly, sang out, "We have been bailed up by bushrangers and robbed of all our money! They shot at us and smashed our buggy, tied us with ropes to trees, and then they hoodwinked us." The tones, the action, the evident distress of the man impressed his hearers, and they could see he was telling the truth, and, turning the horse round, they galloped into Coolgardie for the police.

The Inspector listened to the stirring story, and then the whole party went back to the scene of the outrage. There they found that an ambush had been built near the road, which completely screened the robbers and enabled them to command the road. Pieces of rope and numerous articles were lying about, and some distance away the horse was found tied up to a tree, and it was fast asleep.

The black tracker then picked up the tracks, and followed by the troopers, traced the robbers in

westerly direction for nearly a mile. Here a fire was burning which had evidently been made by the villains for the purpose of burning the two rifles they had used, the woodwork of which was totally destroyed, the metal parts being at a white heat.

The tracks were then followed for a considerable distance, and some miles away from where the fire was burning a pair of boats was found in a hollow log, where the owner had evidently changed them for another pair.

The robbers had evidently doubled back towards the town, and when near Coolgardie the tracks were lost.

Every effort was made to detect the perpetrators of such a daring outrage, but, despite the exertions of the police, nothing ever became of the search, and it remains a mystery to this day who were the perpetrators of this daring outrage.

THE GOLD DIGGERS' "ROLL-UP."

In no country in the world have great goldfields been opened up with less violence and crime than in Western Australia. Australian gold diggers, as a rule, are self-respecting, law-abiding people, who, in out-of-the-way places where representatives of law and order are not within call, do their own policing. In the early days of the goldfields the "roll-up" played an important part in the redress of grievances, the rectifying of wrongs, and the protection of life and property. If, for instance, one of the diggers wronged his mate, or was caught thieving, or in any way made himself obnoxious to the community, a roll-up was called and law and justice were dealt out to the offender according to the diggers' code.

The way to call a roll-up was for a digger to get a tin dish, generally used for panning off, or a kerosene tin, and to beat a tatoo on it with the hand or a bit of stick, and every digger within the sound of that dish was expected to leave his work, whatever might be the nature thereof, and attend the roll-up. In the early days comparatively few would try to evade this unwritten law of digger etiquette; but, with the advance of progress, the roll-up, like many another ancient and honorable custom, has largely died out.

Demonstration—Sir John Forrest's Visit in 1898.

In the winter months of 1894 a wonderfully rich alluvial discovery was made at a place which is now known as Kurnalpi, situate about 60 miles east of Kalgoorlie, from which some magnificent slugs of gold were found equal to anything ever previously obtained in Australia. At one time there must have been close on 2000 diggers at work. In what was then known as "Mentor's Gully" there were two mates working a claim, named Bull and Winter respectively. Bull was a happy-go-lucky sort of fellow, who was much fonder of his bed than of hard work. Winter, on the other hand, was a "grafter," who worked early and late trying to catch the nimble pennyweight. They had been mates for several weeks, during which they had had many rows, and at last they decided to dissolve partnership, one of them going to work for a local tradesman, and the other (Winter) keeping on the claim. Before, however, they parted company, Winter found a 20oz. slug of gold worth about £80, but said nothing to his partner about it. He went to the local storekeeper and got him to send this slug to his wife, who was living in one of the Eastern States. After Bull left him Winter could not work, having no mate to assist him, so he went to a man named Ruse and asked him to be partners with him and he would give him half the claim. To this Ruse replied, "What is the good of your claim? You have found nothing in it, and mine is as good as yours." Winter was nettled at this reply, and said, "Your claim is not half as good as mine, and I can prove it to you," and with these words he took out a pocket book and said, "I could soon convince you, if I liked, that I have a first-class claim." At last he pulled out a receipt and showed where he had deposited a slug, weighing 20oz. of gold with Tom Bower, the storekeeper, as well as receipts for several other amounts. Ruse ultimately agreed to

accept half the claim, and as it was Sunday—the day on which no digger thinks of working—they went into the public-house, and the transfer of half the claim to Ruse was soon effected.

Ruse then went straight to Bull and told him all about the 20oz. slug that Winter had sent away, and stated that he had been finding gold and putting it away without his partner knowing anything about it. Bull was thoroughly aroused at the story of his quandam mate's perfidy; and went and had a warm interview with Winter, who, at first, denied having found or sent away any gold; but he was ultimately obliged to confess that he had done so, but refused to make restitution to his mate. Bull then said, "I shall soon fix you up, then, if you don't agree to divide with me." To all his former mate's threats and entreaties Winter lent a deaf ear. Bull, thoroughly angered by his obstinacy, then said, "I shall call a 'roll-up,' then," and seizing a tin dish from the store he beat a tatoo on it, which soon brought all the diggers into the camp to see what important matter was on hand that anyone should dare to call a "roll-up" on a Sunday morning. When the whole of the diggers had assembled Bull mounted a waggon belonging to the storekeeper and briefly told his story. As he proceeded there were loud cries of "Hang the wretch," "String him up," and other threats of a similar character, couched in less elegant, though more expressive language. It was decided that a formal trial should take place, and that a judge should be appointed, and the diggers in a body should act as a jury. A judge was accordingly chosen, and Billy Mentor, a well-known prospector, agreed to act as barrister for Bull, but no one could be obtained to act as counsel for Winter, who, in addition to not being represented by counsel, was compelled to stand up in

a buggy with a rope around his neck—which was tied to a beam that projected from the side of the store—the butt for the rough jokes and rougher by-play of the younger diggers.

After the usual formula had been gone through, the culprit was asked how he pleaded—Guilty, or not guilty? to which he replied, "Not guilty." The prosecutor then gave his evidence respecting the news told to him by Ruse *re* the 20oz. nugget, and he detailed the reasons that had led to his calling a roll-up. Ruse then detailed the circumstances under which he had obtained the information from Winter as to the finding of various pieces of gold during the time that the latter had been a mate of Bull's. Tom Bower gave evidence as to his having sent several small parcels of gold to an Eastern State to Winter's wife, and the receipts showed that these had been sent away during the time that Winter and Bull were mates. After some other evidence had been taken, and the prisoner had tried to defend himself, the judge then began to sum up, which he did in an able and impartial manner, but strongly against the prisoner.

A show of hands was then taken to decide whether the prisoner was guilty or not guilty of stealing gold from his mate. Nearly every hand was held up in favor of the accused being found guilty as libelled. The judge then appealed to the crowd as to what sentence should be passed on the accused. The rougher element, of whom there were a good many present, cried out to "Hang the wretch," but by far the larger number, comprising the men of weight and influence with the diggers, were strongly opposed to the extreme penalty being meted out for such an offence. But the minority were determined at all hazards to take vengeance on the culprit, and many rows took place between those in favor of the extre

sentence being passed and those against it, which were only settled after a fair amount of gore had been spilt.

In the meantime the trembling culprit looked down from his perch on the buggy upon the swaying mass with terror depicted in every lineament, fearful lest the more turbulent and reckless minority would get the upper hand, and he should have to pay the extreme penalty for his duplicity and dishonesty.

After a time, however, quiet was restored, and two well-known men addressed the crowd, and their arguments had a considerable effect upon the excited diggers. They pleaded with the diggers to maintain the reputation they had achieved of being the most peaceful and law-abiding miners in the world. If Winter were hanged, as a numerically small but noisy section demanded, all present would get into trouble, as the Government of the country would have to put down with a strong hand any attempt to introduce lynch law on to the fields. The speakers also appealed to the crowd on behalf of the wife and family of the unhappy man, who would be the greatest sufferers by a wild and foolish act such as that some of them contemplated. They were, however, in favor of drastic measures being taken to compel the prisoner to make restitution, as far as possible, to his quondam mate, and of expelling him from the camp with every mark of disgrace and ignominy by which they could show their displeasure. Further, that he should be blackballed in every mining camp in the State, and be considered as a pariah amongst diggers all over Australia. This sentence was considered sufficiently severe to meet the case, and upon the judge putting it to the crowd it was carried by an overwhelming majority.

The culprit, who had stood trembling on the waggon with the rope round his neck during the long

d animated debate, now heaved a sigh of relief when found out that the death sentence was not to be posed. He was taken down from the waggon, the pe removed, and escorted by a crowd of rather rough ggers, who handled him in no gentle fashion, he was arched to his tent, where he had to make restitution, d then he was permitted to take sufficient water and ovisions to carry him on to the next town. He was en marched out of camp amidst the groans and jeers his fellows, well pleased to escape with his life.

Accounts of the trial were sent to the various ldfields newspapers, and wherever the culprit went he and out that someone knew him and "put him away." ter being hunted from field to field he saw that emesis was ever at his heels, and he decided to leave e State, a victim of "diggers' justice," which is, in any respects, the most cruel, relentless, and far-eaching to which a man can be subjected in a free ountry like Australia.

A DEAR DRINK.

No one who has not passed through the ordeal can fully appreciate the trials, difficulties, and dangers the pioneers of the eastern goldfields of W.A. had to contend with in prospecting for the gold and in opening and developing the mines after the gold has been discovered. There was always considerable danger to life and limb from the attacks of the aboriginals, as quite a number of the earliest pioneers had to pay forfeit with their lives for their courage and enterprise. These men are always willing to risk the chance of being speared by the natives ; but the ever-constant dread—a dread of which they seldom or never spoke, but which preyed on the minds of the early battlers—was that some day they might venture too far into the desert, water would fail them, and then ——. Many an escape from death through thirst was only averted by the merest chance, but alas! too many never returned to tell their gruesome tale.

Men who went prospecting in those days had to have hearts like lions, and well-lined purses as well, else they would never have attempted such a task. The scarcity of water was the biggest drawback. The year after Coolgardie was first discovered water was sold at Hannans (now known as Kalgoorlie) as high as 5s. per gallon.

The highest price paid for a drink was that given by erry McAuliffe at Kurnalpi. Leaving Kanowna on ne 1st day of February, 1894, accompanied only by his lack boy, he set out to prospect some country through which he had previously passed, situate about 100 miles north-east of that town, to what is now known as Peak's Find. When some distance on the road he met a party of prospectors who were dead beat, having tasted no water for some days. Fortunately McAuliffe was able to spare them sufficient to get back to where they could get more, and, despite the warnings of the prospectors that there was no water to be had in the locality to which he was going, he determined to "chance it," as it had been fairly plentiful on his previous visit. After going about 40 miles the water he had been carrying gave out, and, to his dismay, he found that the information he had obtained from the prospectors was only too true—that all the waterholes were really dried up, and that there was only one chance of saving the lives of himself and party, and that was by making for Kurnalpi. McAuliffe, however, had never been at Kurnalpi before, as the rush had only lately taken place, and the only directions as to where the diggings at that centre lay were those given in a newspaper paragraph he had read some weeks before—surely meagre and unreliable intelligence on the strength of which to risk his life.

By this time the outlook had become very serious, and the horses had not had a drink for two days. The sun beat down on the thirsty men and horses with its cruel, pitiless rays. All that night the animals moved uneasily about the camp, unable to eat, and it was seen that they were about dead beat. Starting early next morning they tried to get the animals to move, but this proved an extremely difficult task. Towards the afternoon the jaded horses were driven near the foot of

a hill, and McAuliffe climbed to the top to reconnoitre. Neither he nor the native boy had tasted water for two days, and the horses had not had any for over three days and nights. Slowly and painfully he climbed the hill, the task proving no easy one after the fatigue and exertions of the previous few days, and the intense thirst made his throat and tongue feel as if they were on fire. Suddenly a cloud of dust was seen to rise about six or seven miles away, and he then knew that he must be near the diggings at Kurnalpi, as that was the sign that men were at work "dry-blowing." The sight of the dust gave them fresh hope, and the greatest efforts were made to get the horses to move. When some distance from Kurnalpi a man came along who gave McAuliffe a water-bag full of the life-giving fluid, which was drunk with greediness by McAuliffe and the black boy, and put new hope and vigor into them both. It was a task of the most difficult kind to get the animals to move, but the water had put fresh heart into the party, and the animals were partly led, partly driven for the last few miles till they came to Tom Elliot's condenser, and the sorry plight the horses were in was made known to him.

Elliot at once replied that he would get a drink for the eight horses if he possibly could do so. The horses were so spent that they all lay down, utterly exhausted with their toils and the want of water. Meanwhile Elliot went round to the various condenser holders and told them the narrow escape McAuliffe had had, and all agreed to contribute as much water as each one could spare, so that all the horses might get at least one good drink. As there was not a supply of fresh water on hand the horses had to wait till it was condensed. The diggers had walked a long distance—in some cases as much as eight miles—

get their water-bags filled, and there was some tall swearing on account of men being kept waiting to permit horses to have a drink. It took Elliot three hours to collect sufficient water to give the horses a good drink, and then the water was sold to him as a great favour.

When the bills for the water that Elliott had obtained from the various condenser proprietors for the one drink alone were collected, it was found that they totalled the tidy little sum of £15 11s., or nearly £2 per head for the one drink. McAuliffe paid the amount like a man, remarking that "it would take a prospector with a bank at his back to pay such prices for water." After the horses had rested a few hours he started for Coolgardie, and managed to get through, though one of his horses died from the "gruelling" it had received on the road. This is the record price paid for a drink of water on the Coolgardie goldfields, and all will admit that the men who were enterprising enough to go to such expense, and risk such hardships and dangers in prospecting for gold, were well worthy of the rewards they obtained.

FATHER LONG AND HIS "SACRED NUGGET."

"News of the finding of an exceptionally rich slug of gold, weighing nearly 100lb., by some prospectors near Kanowna, has just been received from Father Long, of Kanowna. The reverend gentleman, however, is unable at present to divulge the names of the finders, or the locality where it was obtained, owing to his being pledged to secrecy." Such was the startling statement which appeared in the goldfields newspapers one morning about the middle of July, 1898. This news threw the thousands of diggers into a state of intense excitement, which it is difficult for those who have not lived on a goldfield to realise. The locality in which the alleged nugget was found was kept a profound secret; and despite the most searching investigations on the part of the police and Mines Departments, no definite information respecting it could be obtained.

Just about the time the nugget was supposed to have been found, mining matters were getting very quiet at Kanowna. Several of the latest "rushes" had turned out "duffers," and the healthy spirit of enterprise which had prevailed was beginning to grow feeble. But the news of the great "slug" put fresh life and energy into the people, especially in the

Father Long, who reported discovery of the "Sacred Nugget."

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

immediate neighborhood of Kanowna, and prospecting was vigorously carried on for miles around the town. As the weeks passed by, public excitement, instead of abating, actually increased; and hundreds arrived by every boat from the Eastern Colonies, drawn, of course, by the reported find of the monster nugget. At last the excitement rose to such a feverish pitch that the authorities were fearful of a disturbance taking place, and Father Long was pressed to disclose where the alleged nugget had been found. After a time he publicly stated that on Thursday, the 11th of August, at two o'clock, he would reveal the locality where the mysterious nugget had been found.

That was enough. From a very early hour on the morning of that eventful day vast crowds of excited men gathered in the vicinity of the hotel where the explanation was to be given, eagerly discussing whether the whole affair would turn out an hoax or not. Many of them had not forgotten the "McCann Rush" and its outcome—the many thousands of pounds it had cost, the many men who had been ruined by it, and the all but disastrous results from the mob's vengeance. The men reasoned thus: All efforts to "draw" the reverend gentleman respecting either the locality where the nugget was found or the names of the finders, or the alleged finders, had so far been futile. And yet no reasonable excuse for all this secrecy could be given, unless the finders had been guilty of larceny or murder, or both. The sceptical—and there were many such—were of the opinion tha no nugget had ever been found, but that the whol affair was either the result of a practical joke, a deliberate hoax, or the offspring of an over-heated imagination, to which authority had been given on account of the position and sacred calling of the gentleman who reported it. There were a great ma

present who thought there was likely to be a big row; and, really, after my former experiences, this appeared to be the most likely ending to the whole extraordinary matter. By one o'clock there were over 4000 persons in the street—at least 1000 of whom were provided with means of locomotion to proceed instantly to the locality where the alleged slug had been found. There were buggies galore, from the stylish turn-out with dashing horses right down to the sorry "crock" with only three sound legs. On the edge of the crowd there were large numbers of vehicles with parties of men having the necessary appliances to "peg out." All, in short, were as ready as possible for the mad rush which, it was expected, would take place. Never had such an array of bicycles been seen on the field before. At ten minutes to two another large contingent, numbering at least 2000 persons, arrived from Kalgoorlie. Extraordinary precautions had been taken by the police to prevent any but representatives of the Press and a very few others from getting into the balcony. However, I managed to get there as a reporter. As I looked down upon that great sea of earnest faces, comprising some of the oldest and most resolute men on the face of the earth, and saw written there eager expectancy and intense excitement, I trembled inwardly. This vast crowd, calm and self-contained, and orderly as it then appeared, needed, I felt sure, but a mere spark to rouse it into devilish fury. I knew that if the men were persuaded that they were being fooled by a madcap orator they would tear him from limb to limb.

Punctually, however, as the clock struck two Father Long stepped on to the balcony of the hotel. He approached the railing, and the crowd, which had been densely packed before, was now squeezed together into the smallest possible space. A considerable

amount of cheering greeted Father Long's appearance, and he stood waiting till order was restored, pale, agitated, and trembling, his rather mobile and expressive features showing the excitement under which he laboured. He began by addressing the crowd as "Men of Kanowna and adjoining fields," and he remarked that "he was placed in a most unenviable and disadvantageous position." Continuing, he spoke for a time in a rather inconsequent vein, the matter also being irrelevant to the important subject in hand. He then asked all the people to promise that after he made his statement no further questions would be asked of him respecting the "Golden Sickle Nugget," or "Sacred Slug," as it had been termed. Further, he asked all who would promise this to hold up their hands. Of course, up went unnumbered thousands of hands—those, in fact, of every man present. This scratch vote having been taken, the reverend gentleman proceeded to blame the newspapers for the grossly exaggerated reports they had spread. The speaker next apologised for not having properly estimated the height which the gold fever had reached, and, inferentially, the dramatic effect his statement must have on the people.

"And now," he proceeded, "I will tell you where I *think* the gold has been found, and the truth about the great nugget as it at present exists. I cannot tell you the names of the men who found it, because I have not their permission. The nugget, however, is in existence at present unsullied and almost untouched. It is not in this town, but is, *perhaps* in one of the other towns, and may be brought back to Kanowna. Then slowly, impressively, and deliberately he said: "The nugget has been found a quarter of a mile on this side of th nearest lake on the Kurnalpi road." Scarcely had t last words left the speaker's mouth than a great r

was heard. The vast mass of men, who had been densely packed together as a living wall, suddenly broke, scattered, and then fled as if a thousand demons had been let loose on them, and they were fleeing from impending destruction—all, however, shaping their course towards the common goal. This was the end of Larkin-street, round the corner of which the Kurnalpi road lay. I had seen many exciting incidents on other Australian and American goldfields, but, surely, never since the yellow devil, Gold, became the medium of exchange did such a mad, headlong rush take place on the strength of such a vague, indefinite, and unsatisfactory statement as that made by Father Long to the multitude on that occasion. To the more thoughtful it seemed an insult to the intelligence—such an impotent and incredible story.

Meanwhile the race to the spot indicated was of the wildest, most dare-devil, and break-neck character. All raced as if their very lives depended upon their pegging out a claim near to the magic spot indicated by Father Long. To those who watched the maddened crowd from the balcony it seemed as if the pace must inevitably result in some person being killed, or, at least, maimed. So many different persons on bicycles were breaking down on the road—their wheels being ridden over by buggies, and sometimes the riders themselves jumped upon by persons on horseback—that it seemed a thousand chances to one that fatalities would ensue. Many injuries were received owing to the breakdown of bicycles, the colliding of traps, and the spilling of horsemen; but, happily, no very serious accident took place. It must be remembered, however, that nearly everyone in the rush was a picked man—the very cream of the diggers—men, that is, whose nerves and skill had been tried on many a rough journey.

After the crowd had stampeded, Father Long essayed to finish his statement, which had been interrupted in such a dramatic fashion, and quiet having been restored, he finished speaking in a distinct and impressive tone of voice by saying, "The slug was found not far from the road, at a depth of five or six feet and its weight was between 95lb. and 100lb." He then retired from the front of the balcony, amidst the thunderous plaudits of the assembled diggers, many of whom, in the face of what looked a definite statement regarding the locality where the alleged nugget was found, appeared to be perfectly satisfied. A cordial vote of thanks was proposed to the reverend gentleman for his statement, and then carried—amidst some ominous mutterings, however, from a numerically small, but by no means unimportant, section of the diggers.

Meanwhile the excited crowd was racing helter-skelter towards the spot indicated by Father Long, a distance of about six miles from Kanowna. They were the motliest crew on the maddest "rush" that was ever seen, even in Australia. The first to reach the spot was one of the alluvial diggers, mounted on a magnificent horse. He started to "peg out" a mining claim the instant he dismounted. Hundreds of others were soon on the ground, and the work of pegging out was carried on with tremendous energy. The mode of taking possession of a mining "claim" is (according to the strict formula) by "fixing in the ground firmly at each corner or angle thereof (or as nearly as practicable thereto) a post not less than 4in. in diameter, projecting above the surface not less than 3ft. and set in the angles of an 'L' trench, the arms of which shall not be less than 3ft. in length and 6in. deep; and the trench shall be cut in the direction of the boundary lines."

It will be easily seen that a considerable amount of work was entailed in performing this strictly-defined operation. However, in little over an hour after the driving of the first peg several hundred mining claims had been formally taken possession of; and what had previously been a deserted waste of sand was now transformed into a perfect forest of pegs and a network of trenches.

Immediately after this took place the race back to town began, each man excitedly trying to outpace his fellows. But the road was more suitable for the horsemen, and they were the first to return, their poor beasts lathered with sweat, with flanks bleeding and presenting a "tuckered out" appearance generally. More than one valuable horse died from the fearful strain, having been literally ridden to death in the fierce race. For hours after the return of the first party hapless bicyclists could be seen straggling back into the township with broken pedals, smashed forks, twisted handle-bars, and punctured tyres. Also drivers leading their helpless horses, with the drivers' mates pushing on the vehicles behind. For a few days work was carried on with feverish activity, but from the first the knowing ones had seen that the chances of obtaining alluvial gold from the neighbourhood of the alleged find were not particularly rosy.

But when a week had passed away without the smallest degree of success, the diggers, to use their own expressive phraseology, "slung it," and a few days after not a single digger could be seen at work. It was many weeks, however, before the excitement calmed down, and in the meantime a very bitter feeling arose against the originators of the rush. It was freely rumoured that threats of personal violence had been offered to those who were considered responsible.

One incident may be given as indicating the

"All those who promise to ask me no more questions about the 'Sacred Nugget' hold up their hands.'

feeling then prevailing. The Rev. Mr. Jenkins, a Wesleyan minister stationed in the Kalgoorlie circuit, who was rather young and not unlike Father Long, was sitting in a railway carriage at Kanowna, waiting to go to Kalgoorlie, when a big, burly Irishman leapt into the compartment, and seizing the minister by the throat, rudely demanded if he were Father Long. Mr. Jenkins, after some considerable difficulty, satisfied the rather impulsive digger that he was the Wesleyan minister, and then, in the strongest possible terms, the irate miner indicated that it was just as well it was so. Father Long continued for some months to reside in Kanowna, but no further information respecting the alleged "Sacred Nugget" was ever tendered by him. It is still a moot point as to how this extraordinary report was first spread. Some asserted it was a "put-up job" by the Kanowna publicans to bring grist to their mills. Others, again, were of the opinion that a practical joke had been played on Father Long; whilst a much larger number believed, and still believe, that the story was the offspring of a too exuberant imagination—told, however, with no evil intent, and in total ignorance of the tremendous influence it would exercise on the popular imagination of the hardy, daring diggers of Western Australia.

But, whatever be the explanation, the criminal folly of rousing the hopes and exciting the minds of the diggers by startling tales of bogus gold finds was at least brought home to all interested with a dramatic force they are never likely to forget.

. . . . .

Soon after this extraordinary incident Father Long died in hospital of typhoid fever, at the early age of twenty-seven.

THE HORRORS OF THIRST.

To the average "Englishman who lives at home at ease" comparatively little is known of the difficulties, hardships, and dangers which gold-seekers have to endure in searching for, opening up, and developing new goldfields. No class of men has ever exhibited more enterprise and energy, more dauntless daring and resolute courage than the gold-diggers of the new countries of the world. The Australian miner is not given to "skite" or boast or complain about the dangers he passes through. He looks at them as part of the "day's work," and deeds of bravery are performed and hardships endured which, if they were known, would thrill the world with admiration and awe. As it is, they pass without surprise or comment, owing solely to the lack of someone to chronicle them.

The opening up of the Coolgardie goldfields was accomplished under the greatest possible difficulties. The early prospectors had to travel over waterless wastes, and literally take their lives in their hands every time they left the few and isolated centres of population. And, alas! how many had to pay toll for their daring with their lives! The following thrilling story was told to me in the early part of 1894 on the streets of Coolgardie, where I met the mate (Patric

Hughes) who had been able to endure the hardships the best, but who bore even then the marks of the awful sufferings he had to encounter on the trip; his pinched face and deeply marked forehead speaking eloquently of the fatigue and agony he had gone through.

Two better fellows and more experienced bushmen than Patrick Hughes and Jack Fouracre, both of whom were "sand-gropers"—that is, native-born Westralians—never set out on a prospecting tour. With six good horses and well-lined saddle-bags, in splendid health and spirits, they left Coolgardie to take up and register the Diorite King, a now well-known gold mine situate 195 miles from Coolgardie. They safely reached what was then known as the "Ninety Mile" (now the township of Goongarrie) without any incident of note taking place. Here they registered the Diorite King at the Government office. Then, leaving the "Ninety Mile," they went sixteen miles to a condenser, where they watered their horses. After this they pushed on nine miles farther and struck camp, but were unable to obtain any water here. Next day they travelled twenty-five miles to a "gnama hole"—that is to say, a cavity in the rock into which the surface water drains when it rains—but they found to their surprise that it was nearly dry, only sufficient being left to give the horses a quarter drink each and themselves a little to make tea with. Jack Fouracre, however, was certain that about fourteen miles from where they were camped there was a large gnama hole, which was full of water when he was there some months previously. This, he declared, would yield them all the water they required. The horses were beginning to get restless and uneasy, but there was nothing for it but to try and make the extra fourteen miles and get to water. When they reached the hole, however, they were

Great Natural Reservoir on Granite Rocks.

horrified to find that there was not a single drop in it. Nothing now remained but to go ahead, which they did, till darkness set in; and they camped for the night on a big mulga flat. Long before daybreak they started for the head of what is now known as Granite Creek. Jack had only been once in that locality before, and the general impression then was that the creek—which was simply the bed of what was a water-course probably once every seven years—was about fifty miles long instead of being, as it has since been proved to be, only fifteen miles. Jack calculated that by striking across the country they would cut the bed of the creek, where, he thought, they would be sure to get water. The horses had travelled all day as fast as their weak condition and the intense heat would permit, but no appearance of a dry creek was visible. The poor animals were terribly knocked up with their long day's journey, while the two men, being scarcely capable of standing, lay down to snatch a few hours' sleep during the cool of the evening. Whether it was owing to the want of water, and the fever induced thereby, Jack Fouracre, who, up to this time, had always taken the lead, and whose knowledge of bush-craft was considered absolutely reliable, appeared to have—to some extent at least—lost his memory for names and places, as he was not at all sure of his bearings. The matter was debated that night by the two mates, and it was agreed to get up early in the morning and try hard to make the head of the creek. The horses rambled about all night vainly looking for water, and the men were too much excited and thirsty to sleep well. Rising before day broke they ascended a hill some way off, and saw what they took to be a line of timber marking where the bed of the creek was supposed to be. This timber seemed about five miles distant. Hope again rose in their breasts, and, pack-

ing the horses, they set out for the creek. By this time the poor horses were scarcely able to move, as they had been nearly three days and nights without water. After hours of painful toil they neared the place they had taken for the watercourse, and Jack, who, by this time, was in a half-crazy condition, was certain the long-sought-for Granite Creek was close at hand. After almost incredible efforts they reached the spot where Jack thought they should find water, but instead they discovered, to their horror, that *it was not the place they were looking for at all*, and there was no trace of water to be found!

The plight the two mates now found themselves in may be better imagined than described. Buoyed up with the hope of obtaining plenty of water for themselves and their horses, half crazy with thirst and heat, they had whipped up their wretched animals and exhausted themselves in their frantic efforts to get as quickly as possible to the supposed water.

The shock was too much for Jack Fouracre, in his weak and half-demented condition; and, cursing his ill-luck, he drew out his revolver to end his sufferings, as he saw no prospect of escape from the horrible death that was staring him in the face. Pat Hughes, however, who, from temperament and physical constitution, was better fitted than his despairing mate to stand the horrors of the situation, plucked the revolver from Jack's hand and called him a fool. Then he said, angrily, "I have followed you all over the bush, Jack Fouracre, but now you shall follow and obey me. We shall go back into the Granite Hills, and see if we can't strike some gnama holes." They rested for some time under a tree, and then tried to strike back into the hills. Presently they came across a buggy tracl which had passed over there some months previousl and, after following it up for a bit, found to th

despair and disgust that the tracks were going towards Mount Ida, and away from the place they wanted to go to. They then determined to proceed to Cutmore's Well, which they reckoned was about forty-five miles away, but was nevertheless the nearest water they could depend upon. By this time Fouracre was very ill indeed, and every now and then he had to leave his horse owing to the intense pain he was suffering. At last he fell right out of the saddle, and when Hughes went to him he said, feebly, "Pat, I am done!—fairly done! I can't go any farther! For God's sake give me my revolver and let me blow my brains out! Anything is better than this cruel, slow death!" Pat lay down gently and patiently beside his mate and tried to soothe him, but it was all to no purpose. The man was suffering dreadful agony and appeared to be dying. They had now been over three days and four nights without water, the heat being terrific. Despair was in their hearts; they were fairly exhausted, their tongues swollen, and their heads giddy and ringing with strange noises.

About 10 p.m. they determined to make one last desperate effort to find Granite Creek or perish in the attempt. They travelled all night by the compass. A fresh breeze was now blowing, and it was nice and cool. They made better headway than they had hoped for. When daybreak came they saw a line of timber about a mile and a half ahead, and Jack swore that it was Granite Creek, the goal which they had been so eagerly seeking. The horses, which had been crawling along at a snail's pace, began to prick up their ears and go forward more rapidly. In an hour and a half they reached the bank where Jack was certain water would be found, as he recognised what is now known to prospectors as the "Cement Hole." Taking a pannikin each, the two mates hobbled, as

well as their tottering limbs would permit them, down to the bank of the creek. It was a last chance. If it failed they would not have waited for death. But, lo! to their intense joy they found an abundant supply of precious water. Hughes, who was the least spent of the two, managed to crawl down from the ledge of the rock which fringed the water-hole, and, dipping in his pannikin, he lifted it up full of water and drank it off. It needs an infinitely abler pen than mine to describe the man's sensations at that moment. He then filled and handed the pannikin to Jack, who was standing on the top shaking with excitement, and he also drained it off with feverish eagerness. As they quaffed the pure cool water it seemed as it it were nectar from the gods. The darkness and despair of hell seemed to lift, and a new earth was opened to them. Both men felt as if they could drink a bucketful, and still remain thirsty. They well knew, however, the evil effects likely to result from a surfeit of water after such a long thirst, and despite the maddening desire to drink more and yet more, prudence restrained them. New energy, life, and hope sprang up anew in their breasts. Their voices, which had sounded hollow, and were scarcely audible when they spoke to each other, now became comparatively clear and ringing. Next the horses, which had been tied up when they reached the water-hole, were given about three gallons each, and in a few hours they got as much water as they could drink. A number of parrots were killed and a grand breakfast cooked, of which each man ate as much as his weakened stomach would permit, nearly all the food, with the packs, having been left some distance back, two days and three nights before.

After getting their traps and "tucker" they rested for a few days, and two of their horses died, havir succumbed to the hardships they had undergor

They then went on to the Diorite King, which they reached in safety.

But the "gruelling" Jack Fouracre had received through the privations and suffering he had endured had wasted him terribly, and he became very seriously ill. Pat found it necessary to bring him to Coolgardie on camel-back, and from there he was taken on to Perth, where he lay in the hospital for many weeks ere he recovered. Hughes himself also suffered a good deal, and it was some time before he was all right again. Although only a little over thirty years of age, his hair turned quite grey within a few weeks of his trying experience. The last heard of Jack Fouracre was from Klondyke, when he wrote to his friends at Coolgardie stating that he was trying to get back to the "Golden West" again. Patrick Hughes is still battling it out at Kalgoorlie, and was a conspicuous figure in the celebrated "Ivanhoe Venture" troubles at that great mining centre. When telling the writer the story of their adventures, both mates declared they were only saved by the "skin of their teeth."

THE GRAVEYARD "RUSH" AT KANOWNA.

The mightiest factor in the opening up of new territory in all the young countries of the world, the bringing over of stalwart men with grit, brains and cash to people it and to build mighty cities, even in the midst of an arid desert, is the finding of that wonderful yellow metal—GOLD. Where shall the search for gold stop? In no place where it is to be found on this side of the grave! Mighty rivers are being dredged in order to find it. For thousands of years men have been digging deep in the bowels of the earth, getting lower and lower down until in some places, as, for instance, in some of the Nevada mines, it seems as if they were on the confines of Hades. The dangers of the desert have been braved, the loftiest mountains scaled, sweltering heat and pitiless hail have, alike, been set at defiance, the greatest hardships faced, the most terrible journeys undertaken to obtain it.

Fear of the living and their weapons will not make men give up the search for gold, whether it be of the red Indian, with his tomahawk and scalping knife, or of his darker coloured Australian brother, with boomerang and waddy. The sacred tombs of the ancients would be spoiled, their foundations uprooted, if, beneath them, there could be found that metal which is the World's great medium of exchange. Nor would the graves of those who have died even in recent times be held inviolate; did not the law bristle with pains and penalties for those who would dare to desecrate them. It is meet and fitting that those who have paid forfei with their lives for opening up and developing new gol

fields should be entombed in ground where the goc have scattered their yellow gifts. But let it once b suspected that bodies lie buried in auriferous earth an their sepulchres will become objects of envy and desire even to the quondam mates of those who lie buried there.

One of the few instances in which "God's Acre" has been turned into a mining field, out of which many fortunes have been made, was the Cemetery at Kanowna. In the early part of 1897 the people on the Coolgardie Goldfields were wonderfully excited by the news that deep leads, some of which were very rich, had been found at Kanowna. Hundreds flocked to the new finds, and soon the whole country around was pegged out. As work proceeded, it was found that some of the claims were on good gold and the "lead" was making towards the Cemetery, a Government reserve of ten acres. The lode "forked" near the Cemetery; one branch, the northern, was quickly picked up, and its golden treasures unearthed, enriching many of the lucky diggers. The south branch appeared to run right through the Cemetery. All the ground round about the fence enclosing it was taken up and worked, and thousands were soon turning over every inch thereof. The large amount of gold won from the north branch only whetted the diggers' desire to get to work in the Cemetery, and a loud outcry was raised to throw it open for mining purposes. For a considerable time the fence was a complete bar to further progress until in November '97 the then Minister of Mines visited Kanowna and gave orders that the Cemetery should be thrown open. There were three separate portions in which persons had been buried, and these were surveyed and a fence put round each to protect them.

Before, however, the land could be legally pegged for mining purposes it was necessary that a notification

"Panning Off" at the Graveyard "Rush," Kanowna.

that the reserve had been cancelled should be published in the *Government Gazette*. The *Gazette* issued every Friday, and many contended that it would not be legal to "peg off" until it was known for certain that the *Gazette* had actually been published, whilst others were of opinion that after 12 o'clock on Thursday night it was legal to peg. As the latter opinion was stated to be shared by the Warden, numbers of men repaired to the Cemetery and waited until 12 o'clock, when many rushed into it and commenced to mark out the ground in the best possible manner, although, owing to the darkness and confusion, it was simply impossible to determine who had put their pegs in correctly. On Friday morning, however, the Warden received a wire from the Minister of Mines, stating that pegging would not be legal till Friday afternoon at 2.30 p.m. The news was telegraphed to the surrounding towns, and many hundreds arrived with the object of taking up claims, recognising the fact that if they were lucky enough to get into the "lead" their fortune would, in all probability, be made within a few months. It can, therefore, be imagined how eager everyone was to try and obtain a claim in the Cemetery, although each one knew that for every claim there would be 50 applicants.

At 2 o'clock there were fully 3,000 persons waiting outside the fence. Some of them were merely spectators, but fully a thousand were there determined to peg out a claim if possible. It was arranged that Sergeant Smith, who was in charge of the police, should ride into the middle of the Cemetery, and when the prescribed time had arrived he should drop his hankerchief as a signal that the reserve was open for mining purposes. There they were, a thousand diggers, each of whom had a pick or spade in one hand and pegs in the other, ready as soon as the signal was given to leap over the fence and commence the work of "pegging out," which

consisted of digging four trenches, one at each corner, in the shape of an ⊔ each leg of which required to be three feet long and four inches in diameter, with pegs at each corner four inches thick and three feet high. As the time approached the excitement grew very great, and the last ten minutes seemed like an hour. At last the Sergeant rode into the centre of the Cemetery, and, taking out his watch, held it in one hand and his handkerchief in the other. As he stood in this position the stillness became painful. All round the fence, like hounds on leash, the thousand eager diggers waited. The suppressed excitement was visible on every face, as with bare arms and heaving chests they stood there, the noblest army in all the wide world, comprising some of the most daring and resolute men on the face of the earth. Then the handkerchief was held aloft, and then dropped, and the silence which had reigned for a few moments was suddenly broken, and with a wild roar, as of troops going into battle, the crowd broke, scattered and leapt into the Cemetery. Then for a few minutes there occurred a scene of the most bewildering description. The wild whirl of bare arms, the gleam of picks and shovels in the sunshine and the clouds of dust—all the diggers looking as if they had gone mad. Never had a thousand of Great Britian and Greater Britain's sons worked harder, sweated more, and used pick and shovel more effectively than in that graveyard.

When the dust cleared, it was seen that what before had been a peaceful city of the dead had been transformed in five minutes into a veritable forest of pegs and network of trenches, the richest goldfield in the world. The diggers, sweating with their killing task, where now laughing and joking, each one satisfied that he had done his level best to secure a good claim for himself. All breathed for a short space, and then

the more resolute set to work to put down shafts. In nearly every instance, however, empathic protests were entered by dozens of men who laid claim to having pegged out also, and who thought they were as much, if not more, entitled to work than the diggers who claimed possession. Injunctions were in nearly all cases granted by the Warden, and the enterprising diggers had to discontinue working until the ownership of the claims was also determined by that official.

The Warden then found himself in the unfortunate position of having to decide the conflicting interests of hundreds of people, each of whom was willing to swear that he was the first to "peg out" the claim for which he was making application. It would have been simply impossible for any man to have decided the cases on their merits, and, as the law did not permit the Warden to ballot to determine who should obtain the various claims, he adopted another plan. One of the Mining Regulations provided that all pegs used in the taking up of mining claims should be the regulation size, as previously described, but this regulation had never been insisted upon, and the claims of the men whose pegs were not up to regulation size were thrown out of court. By this means the number of applicants was considerably reduced, but despite this, it took three weeks, sitting night and day, before the ownership of the claims was determined.

The high hopes of the lucky holders were in many instances realised, as quite a number of them made large sums of money, and not a few obtained sufficient to retire to the old country. It is safe to say that many thousand pounds worth of gold was taken from the Kanowna Cemetery, and that it may be justly considered the richest "Gods Acre" ever opened up for mining purposes in the history of the world.

"SHOOT AT HIM, OR I'LL KILL YOU!"

A few weeks previous to the following incident taking place, Western Australia rang with the news of an extraordinarily rich gold mine having been discovered at Mount Catherine, which was described as "a mountain of gold." The miners were wonderfully stirred by the news, especially when it became known that some of the prospectors who had made the discovery had been taken into custody, on the information of one of their mates, on a charge of murdering a number of blacks who were supposed to have looted their camp. The accused had been brought into Coolgardie and tried on the capital charge, but they were ultimately acquitted.

At the time our narrative begins, Sergeant Stokes was out in charge of a party trying to obtain evidence to support the testimony, or, at any rate, to find out the truth about the reported wholesale massacres.

In the then state of the public mind, it was felt by the prospectors that to attempt to use firearms against the natives, for mere pilfering, was dangerous in the extreme, and it was only when brought face to face with the possibility of being killed that men, in self defence, would kill the natives.

Thomas Black and Richard Farrell had set out from Coolgardie on a prospecting tour, but they had little luck when the news arrived that Mount Catherine had been discovered, and they immediately made for that neighbourhood, and were fortunate enough to discover a rich reef between Mount Catherine and Yirilla. The natives had frequently annoyed them, but nothing serious had taken place up to the time of which I write. The prospectors, however, knew that if they were deprived of their provisions by the aboriginals, there would not be the slightest hope of getting any more, and they would, in all probability, starve; so that it was a matter of supreme importance to them to protect their supplies at all hazards.

Both prospectors had been out fossicking, and on the way back to the camp, which was about a mile away, Black took a shorter cut homewards over the top of the hill, whilst his companion walked round the foot of it. On reaching the summit, Black could see the camp was crowded with natives, who seemed to be plundering it, and, uttering a warning cry to his mate, he rushed down the side of the hill and, with a wild yell, jumped in amongst the natives who were too busy looting to notice his approach, sheltered as he had been by the scrub. A short, stout native, in one of whose hands there were several stolen articles, lifted a spear, which he had in his right hand, evidently with the intention of throwing it at Black, when the latter drew his revolver, which he had in his belt, and fired point blank at the native, who fell, shot through the heart.

The other natives, hearing the report of the revolver and seeing their mate fall, fled, leaving the dead man behind, and ere Farrell, who had hurried up upon hearing his mate's danger signal could arrive, all the other natives had disappeared.

"Group of typical Westralian Aboriginals."

Placing his hand on the dead native's heart, to feel if he were yet alive, Tom Black said :—"Well, I had to kill him, or I think he would have potted me. You however, must have a shot at him too, for, after Mickey and the others being jugged, it would go hard with me if you split."

"Oh!" said Farrell, "there's no use of *me* shooting him."

"That is all right," said Black, "but with Sergeant S. kicking about the country, with black trackers, looking for dead niggers, no matter where we bury him he may be found, and I don't want anything of that kind to happen me now. I am in the fire, and you must share the blame with me. We have a splendid show here, and if any of these sneaking brutes came round and thought they could put you and me where Mickey's mate has put him, they would soon do it if they could jump our claim. Take the revolver and put a bullet into him, too!" at the same time thrusting his revolver into his mate's hand.

"I will be d——d if I do," said Farrell, "as I see no points in shooting a dead nigger." The excitement which had been blazing in Black's eyes grew still more intense, and with a voice quivering with emotion he said:—"Look here! I have prospected this country now for close on five years, and have never had any luck before. Even though you are my mate I am going to take no risks. The treachery of Mickey's mate has made me vow to trust no man—nay, not even my own brother—as the lust for gold seems to turn even good men into devils, and, as you know, the Mount Catherine prospectors are now lying in Coolgardie gaol on a charge of murder through the perfidy of their trusted mate. I shall run no risks of being blabbed upon, and, if you don't shoot at him I will shoot you, where you stand, for dead men tell no tales."

Farrell looked up into Black's face and saw written there a determination to carry out the threat, and, grasping the revolver, he fired at the dead man, the bullet passing through the fleshy part of his leg.

"That will do," said Black. "You are as much in the mud as I am in the mire."

In a short time a hole was dug, the body thrown in, a heap of wood piled on top and a blazing fire kindled, the embers from which effectually hid the burying place of the dead native.

Four months later, when Dr. S. had paid over the balance of the purchase money for their mine, and the two mates in company with several other prospectors from the "never, never country" were "painting the town red," the story of how Ned Farrell shot the dead nigger was told in the parlour of the —— Hotel in Coolgardie.

A GOLDFIELDS RIOT.

To those who have been accustomed to an ample water supply, to the luxury of a bath, every morning, and the washing of hands and face several times per day, and to spotless linen and clean underclothing, the bare idea of having only from half to one gallon of water per day, with which to wash, cook, and drink—and this under a scorching sun—seems awful. What agonies the goldfields pioneers endured! Not simply from the lack of water, but from the ever-constant dread that hung over their lives, like a sable pall, that some day the small supply of water they were able to get might give out, and then——the thought even was enough to make the strongest and bravest shudder. In the early days of Hannans (now known as Kalgoorlie), it was a common sight to see hundreds of men, each with a water-bag in hand, going to the condensers to get his gallon, or half-gallon, of water, according as his purse would allow and the supply of water permit—for money very often could not command the sale of even limited supplies of water. In September, 1894, the supply of water was very short in Coolgardie; in fact, there was almost a water famine in and around that then thriving town. It was found necessary to send out from Coolgardie to Hannan's Lake, a distance of 27 miles, for supplies, which were usually brought in carts or on camelback. There were a number of proprietors who had condensers at this "dry salt water" lake. One man only, the late James McDonald, made a speciality of supplying Hannans with water,

Group of typical Westralian Aboriginals.

and the amount he was capable of turning out with his extensive plant was about 1100 gallons per day. The salt water, from which the fresh water was condensed, was obtained from shallow holes sunk in the bed of the lake, averaging 12 feet deep, and, owing to a big demand from Coolgardie, there was a scarcity. In consequence of this scarcity, the condenser holders held a meeting—and, ever willing to turn an honest penny, believing that the digger's extremity was their opportunity—at which it was agreed to raise the price of water from 6d. to 1s. per gallon. The latter price had been the price ruling up to within a few months back. This was a most serious matter for the diggers, who gave vent to their feelings in no measured tones or bated breath. The popular outcry against this increase grew so great that a number of the condenser holders grew frightened, and reduced the price to 9d. per gallon; but McDonald, upon whom the bulk of the miners depended for their supplies, refused point blank to reduce the price one penny under that which was agreed upon by the condenser proprietors, despite the threats of violence to which he was hourly subjected. Public meetings were held and resolutions passed strongly condemning McDonald for his action, and he was plainly told that if he persisted in keeping up the price of water to 1s. per gallon it would be all the worse for himself. But, despite all the threats of violence, McDonald, who was by no means deficient in courage, signified his intention to maintain the price, and a monster roll-up was called for Saturday night, when it was intended that a demonstration of feeling on the subject would be given which even the stoutest hearted could not ignore. On Saturday forenoon Mr. Harry Avery, McDonald's manager, was told by a drunken man, who came to buy water, that it was the intention of some low blackguards to burn down the

store that night. This statement, however, was not credited. As darkness set in on Saturday night a genuine "roll-up" took place. Miners beat the tatoo on tin dishes, and in response thereto nearly 1500 men were gathered together to discuss the position and decide what steps (if any) should be taken to try and get the price of water reduced to the old figure. There were many fiery orators present, some of them men of education who have since figured prominently in the political arena. It was pointed out that the salt water, from which the fresh was condensed, was the property of the people; that there was no reason why the poor diggers, many of whom had hard work to keep body and soul together, should be blackmailed in such a fashion for one of the most important necessaries of life; that the raising of the price was the result of avarice and selfishness, and should be resented at all hazards. Meanwhile the manager, who was in charge during the absence of McDonald, with the latter's wife and family, were all unconscious of the storm which was gathering over their heads. So many meetings had been held and no attempt made to molest the store or take any violent action that none of them feared any danger.

Suddenly the tramp of men marching outside was heard, and, looking out, the manager saw that the crowd was coming down the street, and in front of the procession was an effigy of McDonald. When they reached the store the word "Halt!" was given, and the crowd divided into two sections, leaving an opening in the centre. A further display of oratory was indulged in, after which the effigy was burnt with all the pomp and circumstance which the limited means at the command of the diggers would permit, and amidst shrieks, groans, and howls for the offending condenser proprietor. In face of such an expressive demonstra-

tion of feeling the diggers thought that no further display was necessary, and they were preparing to clear off to their camps, when suddenly a rush was made for the store, which was composed of wood and canvas, by a number of well-known "spielers," backed by a crowd of half-drunken loafers, evidently with the intention of looting it and seizing the large quantity of provisions that were stored therein. A number of well-disposed citizens, headed by a powerful young digger, divining the object of the "push," sought to frustrate it by forming a cordon around the store, and, pulling the manager outside, they locked it up. One of them appealed to the crowd not to do anything contrary to law and order, asking those who wanted to preserve the peace to lend a hand to protect the store. This appeal was answered by a number of men ranging themselves beside those who had previously assisted. Seeing that there was not much chance of looting the store with so many guarding it, two dastardly miscreants tried to set it on fire by placing lighted matches at the bottom of the canvas walls, which had become frayed through the wind flapping them on the ground. The powerful young fellow previously mentioned, seeing the attempt to fire the store, rushed at the would-be incendiaries and flattened them out with his fists, and then put the fire out, which had just caught alight. A general *melee* then occurred, and the proceedings were exciting in the highest degree. The "spielers" were determined to loot the store, and the genuine diggers were strongly opposed to such a proceeding, whilst those who knew what was in the store were afraid of their lives, as the peril was tremendous. The battle raged between the two parties for some considerable time, during which some severe fighting took place. One of the men, who was leaning against a large galvanized iron tank, containing 1100

gallons of water, began hammering it with his foot, or, as some asserted, with a pick, and in a short time he had made a hole in it, about two feet from the bottom of the tank. This caused a diversion, as the sight of so much precious water running to waste while hundreds of thirsty men, who had scarcely tasted water that day, looked ravenously on, was such an uncommon one that all hands looked on with dismay. The idiocy of such a wanton outrage struck the better disposed at once, and all hands set to work to save the water as best they could, using whatever vessels were at hand to convey it to an empty tank that was close by, whilst a digger, with considerable presence of mind, took off his coat and promptly stopped the hole. This woeful waste roused the indignation of many who had not previously taken any part, and they soon quelled the riot. Some of the sharpers got round to the back of the premises and stole hundreds of gallons of water out of the other tanks, but again the genuine diggers came to the rescue and chased the thieves away. During the whole of the din the wife of the proprietor of the store, with her children, had been sleeping in the dwelling at the back, and they were then conveyed to a place of safety. Little did the mob who were so desirous of setting fire to the store think that had they succeeded in their attempt, in all probability, they would all have been blown to pieces, as there were no less than 10 cases of dynamite, a quantity of powder, 3000 detonators, with fuse and other combustibles—sufficient, had they been exploded, to have wrecked the whole town and killed everyone in it. Satisfied with the havoc they had committed, the crowd then dispersed. Whilst discussing the situation that night, after the crowd had gone, a knock came to McDonald's door, and as it was 12 o'clock the manager did not care about opening it. As the visi-

however, said he was a policeman, he was admitted. He said he had just come to offer congratulations to all hands that everything had passed off so well. In answer to queries, he stated that he had been an interested spectator, but considered that as he was the only constable within 20 miles, it would have been unwise and impolitic to have interfered when there was such a large and excited mob about.

On Sunday, at 11 a.m., another public meeting was held, and it was decided to send for Mr. McDonald, who was down at Hannan's Lake, and ask him to explain to the diggers the grounds on which he had decided to raise the price of water. In response to this request, McDonald, despite the events of the previous evening, consented to give his reasons for the big increase. Another public meeting was held on the street on Sunday afternoon, which McDonald attended. After a number of trenchant and eloquent speeches had been made, pointing out the hardship this arbitrary increase in the price of water had caused, Mr. McDonald was invited into the rude rostrum to defend his action and that of the other condenser proprietors. Quietly, and with a considerable amount of rough dignity, he stepped on to the platform and looked upon that large crowd of daring and resolute men, some of whom the night before had tried to burn and loot his property. His appearance was greeted with loud cheers, mingled with hisses and cries of dissent. When order had been restored, McDonald recounted the various causes that had decided him to consent to the raising of the price of water. An agreement had been arrived at, he said, by the condenser holders, after the subject had been fully considered in all its bearings, to raise the price of water. There was a difficulty in obtaining a sufficient quantity of salt water; wood was very scarce and high-priced; horse feed

was £40 per ton, and the cost of production was much more than it had previously been. He appealed to the diggers themselves to send out a deputation to the Lake to make enquiries and find out whether what he stated was correct or not. The courage displayed by McDonald, his rude eloquence, and his determination to keep his compact with the other condenser proprietors, despite the threats so openly made, and the dastardly attempts of the previous evening, commanded the admiration—although they did not convince the judgment—of the crowd. In compliance with this request, a deputation of four diggers was sent to the Lake, and, after examining the matter fully, three of them reported adversely to the statements made by McDonald, alleging that they were totally incorrect, and that there was not the slightest necessity for raising the price of water, as 6d. per gallon left an ample margin of profit, and recommended that no more than 6d. be paid. The other member of the deputation did not entirely concur with this opinion, although the price was too high, in his opinion. It was decided to boycott McDonald, and the diggers all pledged themselves to purchase nothing from him until he reduced the price of water. Other condenser owners then started business, there were a number of diggers who went off to a new rush, the condenser's ring, formed to keep up prices, was broken up, and the price of water was reduced to £1 per hundred gallons. Thus ended one of the most exciting times on the goldfields, marking an epoch in their history, as this was the first attempt made by diggers to gain their ends by any other than the fairest and most honorable means, and the first breach of that marvellous respect for law and order which has always been a distinguishing characteristic of the diggers on the W.A. fields.

"QUEEN OF THE EARTH."

About the middle of 1894 a marvellously rich "golden hole" was found 12 miles south of Coolgardie, which was known to fame as the "Londonderry." As months rolled on and the high hopes excited by the finding of this and other rich mining properties seemed likely to be realised, the fame of the Western Australian mines spread all over Australia, and towns in the remotest "back blocks" were stirred by the news of such wonderfully rich finds. The memories of former struggles and triumphs, of speedy fortunes made in a short time, were revived amongst the old colonists, and it seemed as if history were going to repeat itself and the good old times of Ballarat and Bendigo were coming back again. The thriving mining and pastoral town of Cobar, in New South Wales, was excited by the visit of a man named Evans, who had been mining in W.A., and who had come back on a visit, bringing with him a large number of splendid specimens of gold-bearing quartz. This practical proof of the riches of the new Eldorado stirred the public mind, and a company was formed called the W.A. Prospecting Company, with a capital of £3000, in 60 shares of £50 each. Three men were chosen to go over to W.A. and prospect there for gold

and other precious minerals. Mr. Archibald Roxburgh, coroner of the district and local magistrate, was chosen as leader; David McGregor, a mining man of considerable experience, one of the best bushmen in Australia, whose knowledge of the habits and customs of the aboriginals was very great, who could live on their food, and to whom the roots and trees, grubs, lizards, white ants and caterpillars—luxuries usually indulged in by the native blacks alone—afforded ample food supplies on a pinch. The third member of the party was Fred Weston, a surveyor, who had been in England with the New South Wales Lancers, and figured conspicuously in London as a prize winner in the various tournaments in which his corps took part. The party arrived in W.A. in the latter part of '94, and prospected in the Kanowna district for four months, but without the smallest degree of success, the only gold obtained being a speck worth, probably, 3d. About this time the "Mount Catherine" discovery was made by some prospectors. This had been described by one who was then considered to be a responsible mining man as "a mountain of gold." The whole of Australia was stirred by the news that the discoverers of this mountain had been arrested on the information of one of their mates on a charge of murdering a large number of blacks under circumstances of the most wanton cruelty, and brought into Coolgardie, where they were tried but subsequently acquitted. Attracted by the fame of the mountain of gold, the party agreed to obtain four camels, and prospect the Catherine district. On arriving there they heard it rumoured that Jerry McAuliffe, one of the best known prospectors in the State, and the discoverer of Kanowna, had found a leader carrying rich gold. McGregor determined to find out the locality where this leader had been obtained, and, taking some food and his water-bag, he

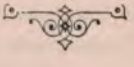
set out and struck across the country. He had prospected all day without any luck, and was getting tired, when he came across a quartz reef, which he traced for a couple of hundred yards by the outcrop on the surface. He napped stone all along the line of reef, but there was not a sign of gold, although in places the quartz looked "kindly." Tired out and thoroughly dispirited by the constant ill-luck which he had experienced, he sat down to ruminate. What would the shareholders think of the party being out so long and never getting a colour? It was hard luck, indeed, after "bullocking" as they had done. Looking lazily along the line of reef he saw a boulder on the top of which there was something glinting in the sun. Can that be gold? he thought. No, it is not at all likely. Curiosity, however, prompted him to rise and examine the shiny substance, and to his astonishment and delight he found that it *was* gold, the stone being immensely rich.

Lying all round were pieces of stone fairly impregnated with the yellow metal. As he stooped to pick them up the thought flashed through his mind that he might be only dreaming, or that, mayhap, he was insane. It seemed too good to be true. The dreams of twenty years had at last been realised, and at his feet there lay a golden treasure that might eclipse anything ever previously found in Australia. At last, however, startled by the thought that some person might come on the scene and secure the treasure spot, he hastened to peg out a 24-acre lease. Luckily, Weston, his mate, found him out that night, and the news having spread respecting the great discovery, McGregor having sent word to a former mate of his, and soon there was a small crowd present. McGregor made up his bed on the top of the treasure spot, and night and day he guarded it with jealous care for nearly

16 months. Weston slept for several nights with the gold already found, which was worth about £2000, buried under his head, and both were well aware that there were many desperate men about who would readily murder them could they secure the gold.

It had been agreed amongst the various members of the party that if any one of them was lucky enough to "strike it rich," he should have the right to decide by what name the discovery should be called. McGregor used to sing the well-known song, "Queen of the Earth," around the camp fire by night, and when it came to naming the lease he thought that the find was well worthy of the name, and the name well worthy of the find, and "Queen of the Earth" the "show" was accordingly called. The fame of the wonderful find was soon noised abroad, and hundreds of diggers paid a visit to "her." There was a magnificent piece of quartz showing on the surface, in and round which there was about £2000 worth of gold visible. Shortly after the "Queen of the Earth" was discovered the State was startled with the news that the "Londonderry" had "petered out," and that the high hopes raised as to its great future had been dashed to the ground. Mr. Roxburgh had supplied me with particulars of the property, with a view to my selling it, if possible, and had asked the modest sum of £100,000 for it, and one-fifth fully paid-up interest in any company that might be formed to work it. This was subject to a 10 per cent. commission, and I approached every buyer on the field to purchase it, but all to no effect. Had the lucky discoverers been willing to accept £50,000 for the purchase of it right out, they would, in all probability, have obtained it, but nothing less than a century of thousands would content them. The lesson of the "Londonderry" had, unfortunately, been too bitter to be forgotten, and for 16 months they

waited and hoped for a purchaser to come along—but all in vain. The truth is, they were afraid to sink on the property, in case it would be a repetition of the "Londonderry" fiasco. During this time McGregor literally lived on and for this treasure spot, and he watched it both night and day with the most jealous care. Work had, however, been carried on in different parts of the lease, but owing to the scarcity of water, every drop of which had to be carried 35 miles on camelback, it was a most expensive undertaking. At last, tired out with the long and weary wait, they determined to see what there was under the surface show. They then began to sink, and down to a depth of 10 feet the stone improved in value, but below this it became poorer, and ultimately it was impossible to get a colour. At a depth of 21 feet there was a fresh make of stone, but this proved to be only a patch; at 30 feet deep, however, about £5 worth of gold was obtained, and after this the reef became absolutely barren. From the surface to a depth of 21 feet there were 29 tons 13cwt. 2qr. of stone taken out of the shaft, which yielded 2938oz. of gold and silver, valued at £10,767 3s. 7d. Nearly the whole of this money was put back into the ground to prospect it, with the hope of getting more back again, but the magnificent pluck of the men was never rewarded. But at the time of writing this there are some of the party working the "Queen of the Earth," and, even yet, are confident, such is the style in which some men are built, that they shall reap their reward.



THE POWER OF GOLD.

THE GOLD DIGGER'S SOLILOQUY.

Away out on the waterless desert, hidden from the beaten tracks of men, a lonely prospector, in company with his mate, toils painfully day after day searching for gold. He has been seeking the yellow metal for years, but alas! fortune has always evaded his grasp, and he has invariably been baffled, disappointed, and disheartened. He has crossed burning sands and climbed lofty mountains; hunger, thirst, disease and death have been time and again faced by him. Life and limb have often been placed in jeopardy, when working in the bowels of the earth, and the hardest of hard work freely performed to secure the precious metal. Only a little remains of his store of food; just sufficient to keep soul and body together. The dreadful thought will at times force itself upon him that all the long years of weary and unremitting toil have been spent, the dangers braved, for nought and in vain.

But, despite it all, he braces himself up for the worst, and reiterates his oft-repeated vow:—"*I shall yet obtain a competency or perish in the attempt.* Have I not known what the lack of wealth means? Have I not had to work hard on scanty fare? But few home pleasures have fallen to my lot, nor have I had many friends. The lack of music, the want of books to

satisfy my intellectual cravings; the absence of change and variety—everything, in fact, that makes life worth living is denied to me on account of my want of wealth. I have lofty aspirations, but such are sheer madness to a man not possessed of wealth. And yet, hope ever beckons me on! I believe, nay I feel certain, that some day I shall rise above this narrow life. But how can this be done? For me there is only one feasible way, and that is to discover a good gold mine. Firmly convinced of this, I have travelled over the principal goldfields of Australia, enduring much but hoping more.

"Oh gold! Thou ugly yellow devil! I worship thee, and yet I hate thee! The desire to obtain thee and the things thou canst purchase hath filled our gaols with criminals. Have I not seen high-bred, virtuous, accomplished women wed men bankrupt in honour, destitute of principle, because they possessed a plentiful store of gold? And men of ability and courage lead women to the altar who were devoid of all gifts and graces, even of virtue itself, because, forsooth, they were owners of the dirty metal in bulk, and if, in the older countries, amongst high-bred men and women, rich in education, and knowledge, and experience, this intense, overmastering worship of the Golden Calf takes place, who can blame me, a poor, battling prospector, if, remembering the life I have been forced to live, and am now living, I were determined to, at all hazards, win fortune or perish in the attempt?

"The consideration paid to men who own wealth, or are reputed to do so; the positions to which they aspire, even with a modicum of brains and ability, can be seen any day. Even these democratic goldfields people, who prate of equality, bow down the knee—or rather both knees—to Wealth. The rich men who get *up on* our platforms at public, or semi-public, meetings

are listened to as if they were oracles, even though their logic be weak and their grammar faulty. A mate of mine once spoke at a public meeting, showing (as I thought) a better grasp of the subject under discussion, and more eloquence than any of the other speakers; but his efforts were received with supreme indifference, and, as far as I could see, the only reason was because he had not a "stake in the country." What a difference this "stake in the country" makes! Education, intellect, moral worth, are, or seem to be, of little value unless they are backed by a substantial bank balance to lend weight and dignity to those qualifications. Amongst all classes, from those who toil not, neither do they spin; the middle classes, who honorably perform their allotted duties; the hardy diggers, whose life is full of hardships and dangers; the out-of-works and hand-to-mouths, there is one god whose influence is known, felt, and recognised, and that is GOLD—the great and grand medium of exchange. This god speaks all languages, its power is understandable by all. Bright and yellow, like the glorious orb that rules the day, its presence illumes the homes of those who own it, and fills them with warmth and sunshine. It is a passport to nearly all societies, and the magic of its potent spell weaves round the lives of its possessors a sort of halo and raises them upon a pedestal of power from which they can afford to look with a feeling akin to disdain on their less fortunate brethren."

But when the battling prospector, having realised his wish, emerges from his crysalis state into a full-fledged capitalist, and begins to gauge the wonderful power, that has been placed by fortune in his hands, then it is he says:—

"Oh gold! Thou good creature of God! The possession of thee brings so many comforts and privi-

leges which, without thee, I could not enjoy. I can go to the uttermost ends of the earth, secure in the knowledge that wherever thy potent influence is known and felt—and where is it not?—I can command the services of my fellows for thy sake.

"I have built me a palatial palace and filled it with the finest art treasures. Troops of friends come to my festive board and praise the rare delicacy of my wines and *recherche* meals furnished by my *chéf*. I listen to the sweetest music every night at the opera, theatre, and concert halls. Yachting, shooting, fishing, hunting, and other sports fill up my leisure hours.

"I, who have tramped thousands of miles with a swag, and carried all my earthly possessions—my food, clothing, bed and blankets—on my back, have full-blooded, ample-waisted, powdered flunkeys to do my bidding, and who see that even the soles of my boots are not dirtied.

"Great Scott! It makes me marvel to think the changes that may be wrought by the power of gold. My friends—Save the mark! How long would they be friends if I had no money?—have discovered how much intellectual ability I possess, and are strongly advising me to stand for Parliament, and they assure me that "it will be an easy thing for *me* to obtain a seat, as I have such a big stake in the country, and can afford to do the handsome thing with respect to election expenses.

"I sometimes start at night and wake up with a pang to think that the beautiful dream in which I have been indulging is *only* a dream; that I have been living in a fool's paradise, and the following morning shall see me out again on the "wallaby," with my swag on my back, ever on the weary quest for gold. But when I am fully aroused and feel the eider down quilts on my couch, and see the evidences of wealth and luxury on

every hand, the old, hopeless feeling, so well known in former days, gives place to one of exultation, and I realise that the old life has passed away, and a new and better life been opened to me.

"The marvel of it! To think that this transformation has been effected through my one day stumbling, when hope was nearly dead and spirits were down below zero, upon a heap of ugly stones, thrown up by some upheaval of Nature, and, eagerly searching, I found little particles of a yellow metal glinting in the sunshine—the metal I had toiled and hoped and prayed for, for which I sometimes felt I was willing to give up even my soul, with bitter tears and anguish of spirit.

"Even now that I have in a large measure become accustomed to the possession of wealth, it seems wonderful that such far-reaching results—involving a complete revolution of my ways, means, prospects, habits, ambitions and hopes—should be made by such a simple matter as the finding of a reef with particles of yellow metal disseminated throughout it. And yet this is the secret of my changed life, lifting me from the position of a lowly "swagsman," to whom no one would have lent a shilling, even had I been starving, to that of a wealthy mining magnate, whom ladies, despite my lack of polish, delight to honor, and from whom men desire the 'straight tip' in mining matters.

"Surely the age of miracles is not past. The magic touch of gold transforms the man who is low in the social scale and lifts him, if he have *nous*, to the height of power—the power, at least, of the PURSE.

"After having experienced the disadvantages of poverty, the lack of even the common necessaries of life, for years, and been lifted by the wheel of fortune to a high position where I can afford to speak impartially, I am constrained to heartily endorse the

sentiments so truly expressed by Timon, when he says :—

"Thus much of gold will make black, white ; foul, fair ;
Wrong, right ; base, noble ; old, young ; coward, valiant.
Why GOLD
Will buy your priests and servants from your sides ;
This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions ; bless the accursed ;
Make the hoar leprosy adored ; place thieves
And give them title, knee and approbation,
With senators on the bench."

THE PRICE OF THE GOLDFIELDS.

Wearied with the day's journey I laid me down to sleep. Around me were the tents of hundreds of diggers working on the alluvial diggings at Kanowna. The night was a brilliant one, the full moon pouring a flood of light on the scraggy bush, making the tents weird and ghost-like with its silvery sheen. It seemed just such another night as I had spent over 8 years back when I first landed on the goldfields. Dozing off, I fancied I had just arrived on the fields; my feet were bleeding with the long tramp; there was little water in our bags and our hearts were heavy with the news of drought and suffering we had heard on the road. I awoke with a start to find that I had only been dreaming, that years had passed and mighty changes taken place since I first landed on the goldfields.

I looked down the vista of years, short indeed it seemed, but eventful to a degree, since the fields were first opened up and I thought: How strikingly is the mutability of earthly things exemplified in the history of these goldfields. Nowhere does the wheel of fortune revolve more quickly, bringing more chances and

changes. The cluster of diggers' tents that were there had given place to a beautiful city, with stately edifices of brick and stone. The blazed tracks had emerged into wide streets, and the groups of diggers wearing moleskins had been succeeded by crowds of men and women dressed in fashionable garb made of costly materials. And other towns had risen up equally magnificent, upon whose sites the foot of white man had, at that time, never trodden. As I lay there and passed in review the wondrous strides made in material wealth and prosperity, the marvellous treasures that had been unearthed, surpassing the wildest dreams of the most sanguine in the early days, methought the results achieved by the energy of these pioneers, in whose veins the dominant blood or the ancient Briton flows, are simply unequalled.

What has been the price paid for all these marvellous developments of material wealth and prosperity? Such results have not been achieved without a price being paid for them at least commensurate to their splendour. What then, has been the price paid by these men and women of enterprise and energy who have opened up these fields, and what has been their reward, looked at from a material point of view? Experience teaches that in most cases the pioneers had to battle with poverty, sickness, disappointment, disease and death. These have been for the most part the rewards of those who have led the van, and by their resolute perseverance and invincible determination, in face of innumerable difficulties, blazed the tracks that have become the goldfields highways. A few, comparitively few, have gained wealth, honor, as a result of their early labours; but alas! how few have done even fairly well.

The heroes of the early days, where are they now? *Go* to the cemeteries at the different centres of

population and read there on monuments of wood and stone the names of those who laid down their lives in the arduous task of opening up these goldfields, or into the lonely bush and see the resting places of those who fell by the tracks, their privations unknown, their hardships unchronicled and their memories kept green only in the hearts of those who mourn and watch and wait for the return of the loved ones whose voices will be heard no more by them for ever. Doctors and lawyers, bankers and agents, storekeepers, tradesmen and workers, all alike have contributed their quota to the progress of the fields and all have had to pay their part of the price.

Take the case of Arthur Bayley, the man who, battling through difficulties, discovered Coolgardie. He won wealth and honor; fortune smiled brightly on him, but he could not purchase happiness, and, while his sun was yet at its meridian, he passed in his Miner's Right to the Grand Warden of the Universe. There are others whose services to the State were secondary only to Bayley's, who, after doing much and daring more, died and were buried with none of the outward and visible signs of consideration and honor.

What of the miners' provedores?—The men who followed them to the new "rushes" carrying food and water, often proving the salvation of well-nigh perishing diggers. There were many such in the early days, but the one who was most conspicuous, both for the extent and success of his operations, was foully murdered by a fellow countryman whilst offering up his devotions in the mosque, to the one God and Allah his prophet. And of the merchants and storekeepers, how many of the old hands are left? Far too few! many have been driven by stress of circumstances to retire from business altogether, ruined, mayhap, by heavy cartage of goods, or bad debts, by fires, or over-speculation, or good-

heartedness, until now the list of successful pioneer merchants and storekeepers is a very small one.

The big mining experts, what of them?—The men whose names on a prospectus were a tower of strength, and favourable reports from whom floated even the wildest of "wild cats." Aye, the times were lively when the boom was on, when the experts spent money liberally, and drank champagne at 30s. per bottle as freely as one would drink lemon squashes now. Not a few have left the field of their former triumphs with blighted expectations, ruined reputations and limited bank balances, sadder if not wiser men.

Amongst the sharedealers and brokers the greatest havoc has been wrought. A few have swum to the top, but the most of the "great guns" of former days are "bursted" and too few remain of what was once a proud array of wealth and talent. The professional men who, in the early days, were reputed to be making their thousands of pounds per annum, how few have been able to stick to them. They seemed to think the wealth which kept pouring into the State would get bigger in volume, that high land and mining properties values would continue, and "slumps" were far ahead. Amongst their many gifts, that of perspicacity was not the most conspicuous, and few of the pioneer professional men can be considered to have played up to their opportunities.

What about the rank and file in the early days? How have the workers fared? It is a notorious fact that, considering the amount of wealth obtained in the early days, the number of fortunate diggers was very small. Most of them at some time or other made a "punch," big or small, but the temptation to invest was too great and speculation was too rife to let money lie in the banks for a paltry 5 or 6 per cent. when five or *six hundred* per cent. might be made by successful

speculation. After the big "slumps" the average digger who invested his money in script usually went to the wall.

The successful men, who made money while the sun shone, men of far-seeing intelligence, who availed themselves of the ebb and flood of prosperity on the goldfields, men who were cautious in laying their plans, but bold in carrying them out, some may think but little may be said of them. They have reaped their reward. Yet even these men have had to pay a big price for their success. Look at their prematurely grey hair, the heavy lines on their foreheads, telling of anxious thought, of carking care. It is usual on goldfields to laugh at difficulties that have been overcome, to call successful men "lucky" and to hint that their luck has not been the results of their early toils and shrewd speculations. There is, however, no need to seek to detract from the reputations of men who have made money on the fields. All those who have had experience must admit that those who, bearing the heat and burden of the early days, have made money, richly deserve it. The successful men have contributed their fair share to the price paid for the goldfields.

There is another class who have done much to make the goldfields, and without whom the marvellous energy of the miners would have been almost futile—and that is the mining speculator, the man who was game to plank down his money. When we consider the enormous amount of money which has been spent upon the development of these fields up to date, principally by English-speaking peoples, we cannot help admiring the pluck and enterprise of our brethren. It is safe to say that up to date every oz. of gold has cost very many times over its market value—that is in the aggregate. Out of the large number of mining properties taken up and prospected, even in Kalgoorlie district,

how many have proved "duffers?" It has ever been so in gold mining and shall ever continue so. We in this State have to thank John Bull's sons, who, undeterred by past failures, have had faith in the integrity, pluck and ability of their brethren to overcome all difficulties and reap a rich reward for them at last.

It is this splendid speculative spirit that turns defeats into victories, which has made the British Nation the wealthiest and greatest, commercially and otherwise in the world. It is pleasant to think that a large part of the price paid for the goldfields has been borne by our own folks.

The price then which has been paid for the material prosperity and wonderful development of these fields has been a heavy one, paid for in tears and suffering, in treasure and human life, paid for by hundreds whose names will not go down to prosperity, but whose deeds will be recognised by unborn generations.

[THE END.]

SEP 2 0 1938